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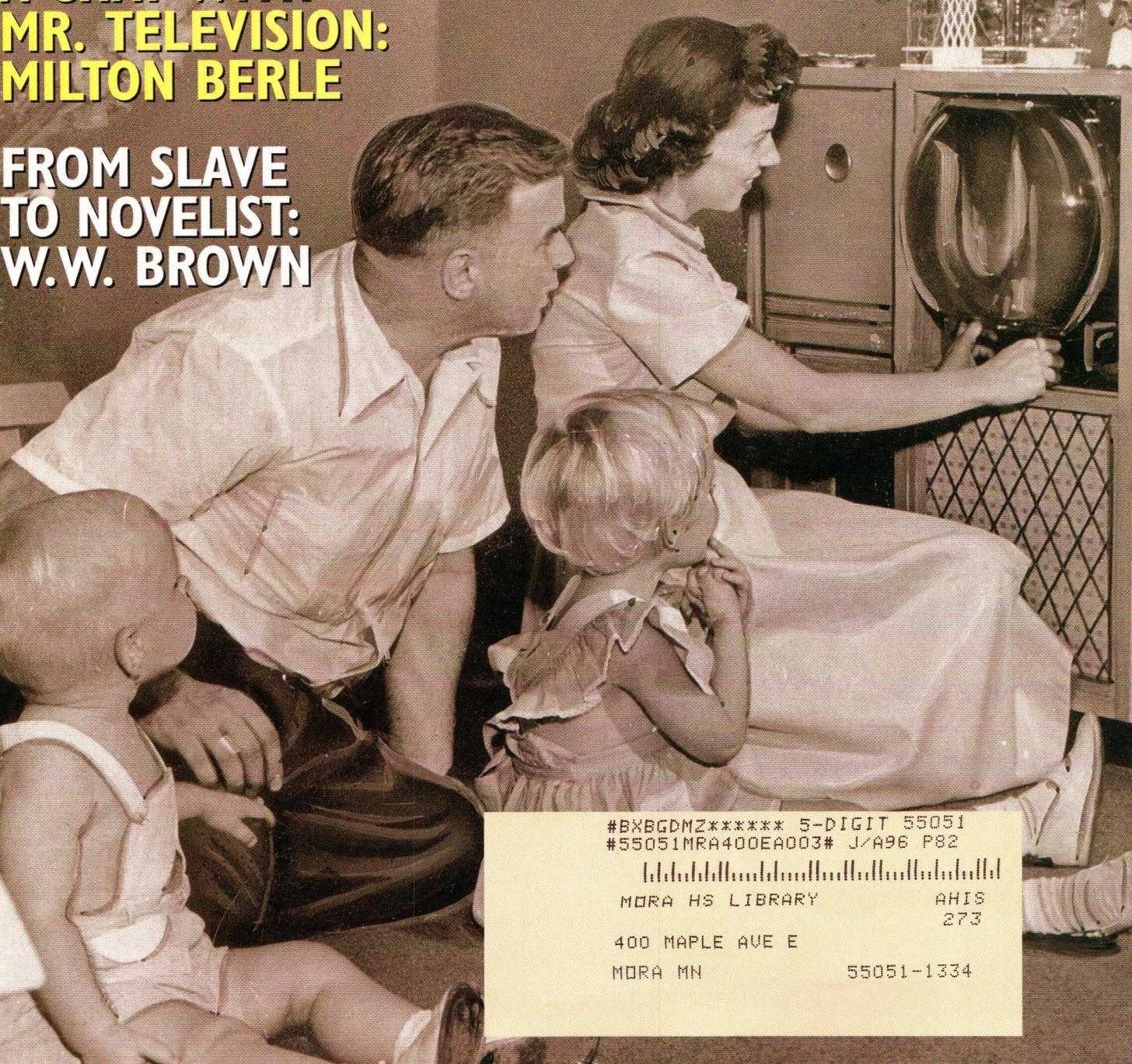
WHEN TELEVISION TURNED ON AMERICA

CLASSICS OF THE EARLY 1950s

MEDIA CENTER

A CHAT WITH
MR. TELEVISION:
MILTON BERLE

FROM SLAVE
TO NOVELIST:
W.W. BROWN



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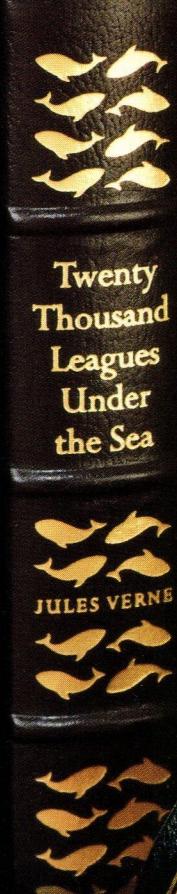
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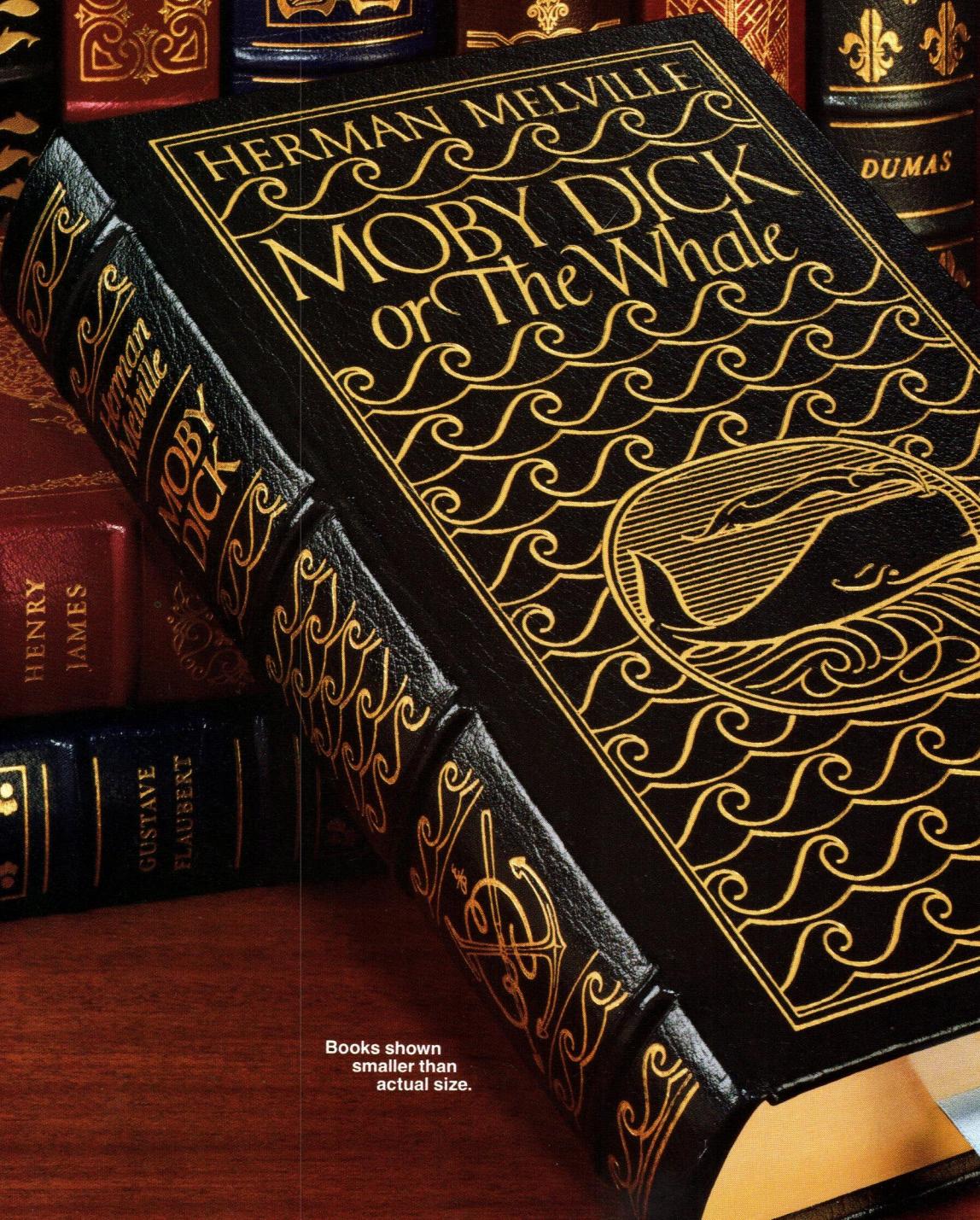
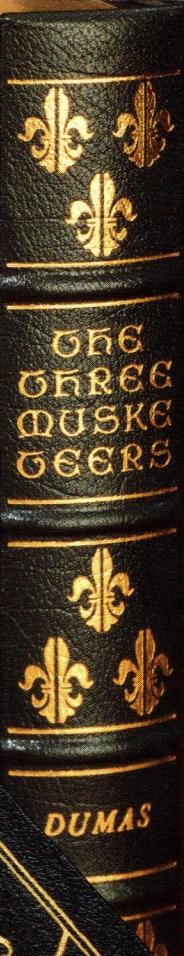
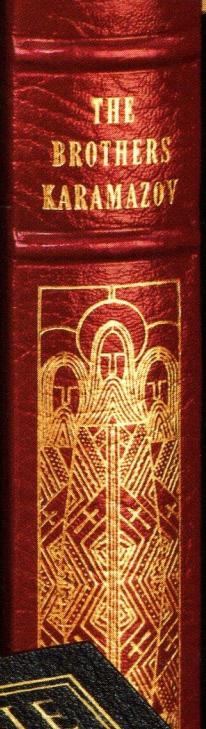
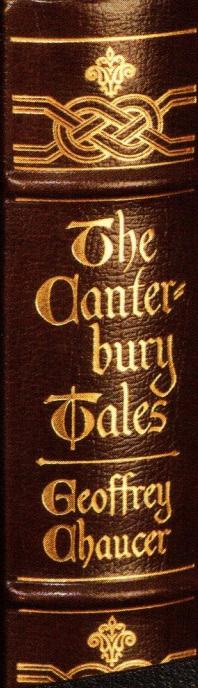
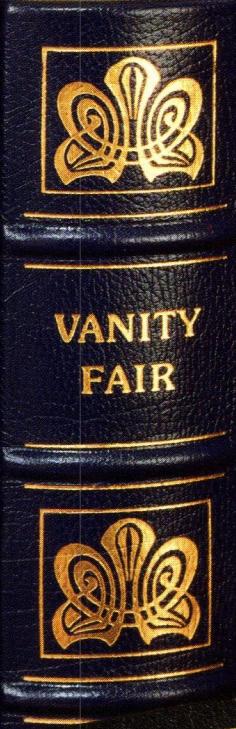
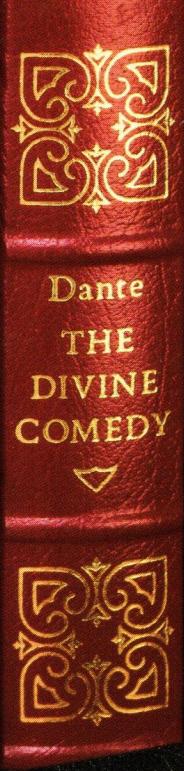
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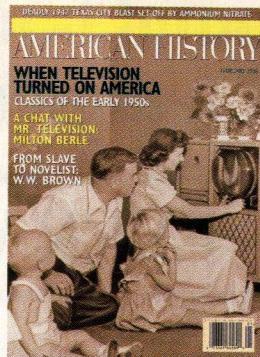
by Marsh Cassidy/
After his 1834 escape to freedom, fugitive slave Williams Wells Brown used his literary talents for the abolitionist cause and to record the history of America's blacks.

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26 TV'S WONDER YEARS

by Edward Oxford/
The classic television programs aired in the early 1950s captured the imagination of the American public and guaranteed a central place for the medium in our lives.



During the last fifty years, television has become an integral part of the lives of most Americans. Thanks to cable television and satellite dishes, viewers have an abundance of choices and still complain that "there is nothing on." In an article beginning on page 26, Edward Oxford looks at the early years of television, when the wonder of the new medium still captivated TV audiences in living rooms across the country, and at the shows from that era that have since become classics.

Cover photograph from FPG International.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1996

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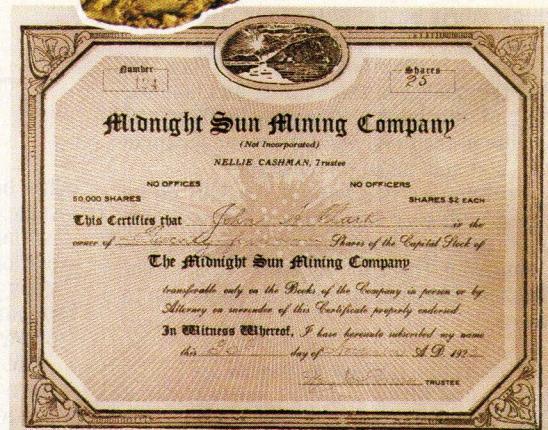
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EDITOR'S DESK

thoughts on history

As we prepared this issue of *American History*, two of the articles seemed to have an unexpected connection with more recent events. John Ferling's article about the Texas City disaster (page 48) immediately brings to mind the horrifying bombing of the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City last April, in which 169 people died (below). Both explosions occurred about the same time of day in the same month, but their most striking similarity is that both were caused by ammonium nitrate fertilizer.

The tragedy in Texas City was accidental, caused by a series of bad decisions and a lack of understanding of the explosive qualities of ammonium nitrate. By itself, the fertilizer did not pose a threat, but the introduction of carbowax coating and the heat of the fire greatly decreased the stability of the compound and set the stage for what followed.

Until the Texas City explosion, the full potential of ammonium nitrate as an explosive agent was unknown; now it is used in 95 percent of all commercial blasting. That grade ammonium nitrate is carefully regulated, but the fertilizer, one of the most commonly used in the world, is readily available. As *Time* magazine noted shortly after the Oklahoma bombing, however, it takes "a basic understanding of chemistry, skill at bombmaking, and technical know-how" to turn fertilizer-grade ammonium nitrate into an instrument of destruction.

In a very different vein, the story of the great Peace Jubilee of 1869 (page 42) recalls another giant concert that took place a century later near Woodstock, New York. Although it was a commercial venture, popular memory has anointed

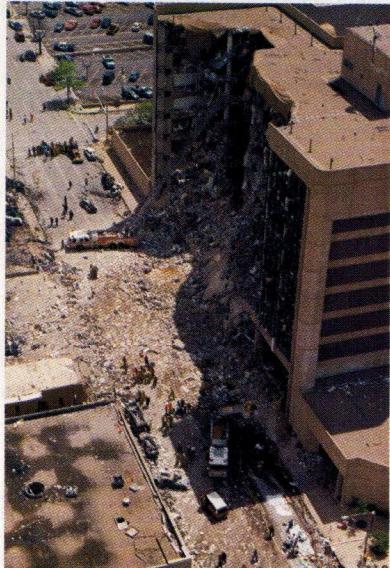
the three-day, outdoor concert at Woodstock with a special significance in the anti-Vietnam War peace movement. As Tom Graves notes in his essay (page 47), it did not start out that way. Rather than being a motivating force in itself, the peace theme was adopted by Woodstock organizers as a way to ensure that the crowd did not become unruly. The device worked beyond their wildest expectations as almost a half million people, mostly under 25 years of age, spent three days in extremely adverse conditions in remarkable harmony, entertained by some of the most popular musicians of the day.

One cannot look at the two concerts without being struck by changes a century wrought. It is unlikely that an event such as attracted thousands to Boston in the post-Civil War era would have drawn the same kind of crowd in 1969. And the conditions under which the Woodstock crowd

were willing to live would undoubtedly shock the earlier generation. It is certainly difficult to imagine President Richard M. Nixon receiving at Woodstock the kind of reception given Ulysses S. Grant in Boston.

One of the reasons frequently given for the Woodstock generation's opposition to the Vietnam War is the impact of television as it brought the conflict into America's living rooms. Beginning on page 26, Edward Oxford looks at the early days of television as it established itself as an integral part of our lives. We are grateful to Milton Berle for granting an interview (page 32) that provided us with his personal insights into the early days of the medium.

—Margaret Fortier



AP/WIDEWORLD PHOTOS

AMERICAN HISTORY

Vol. XXX No.6

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American History (ISSN 1076-8866) is published bimonthly by Cowles History Group, 741 Miller Dr. SE, Suite D-2, Leesburg, VA 22075, a division of Cowles Magazines, Inc., 6405 Flank Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17112-2753. Yearly subscriptions in U.S. \$23.95, Canada \$29.95 (includes GST), Foreign \$47.95, payment in U.S. funds only. Second Class postage paid at Leesburg, VA and at additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to American History, P.O. Box 1776, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. **Subscription questions:** Call (800) 435-9610. **Outside U.S.**, (815) 734-5824. American History accepts no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts not accompanied by return postage. Permission to reproduce the issue or portions thereof must be secured in writing from the publisher. American History is available on microfilm and microfiche from University Microfilms, Inc., 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

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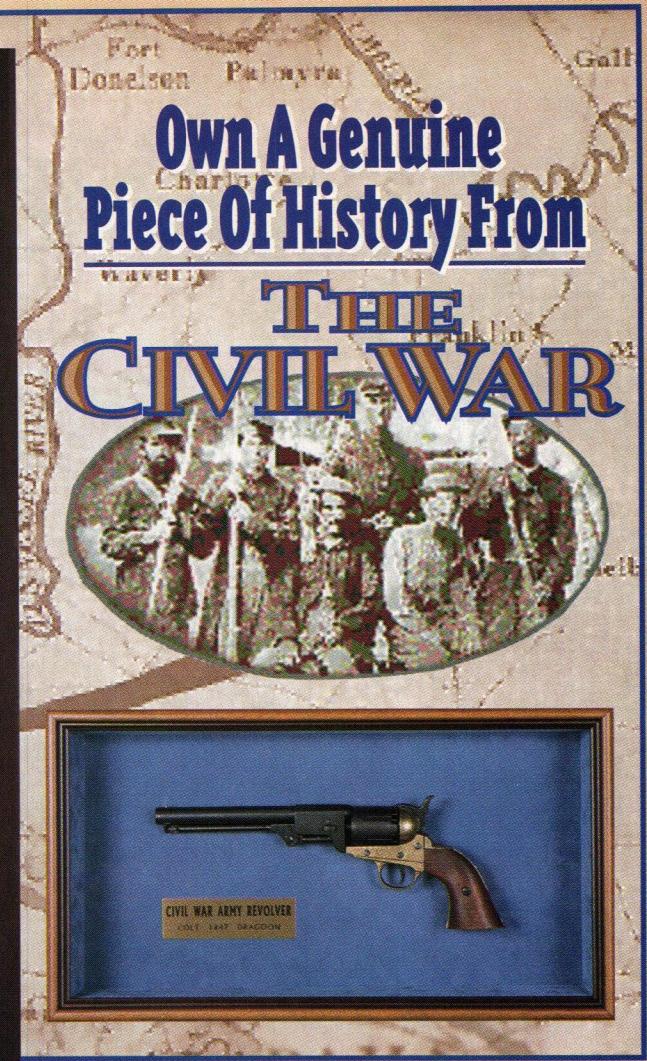
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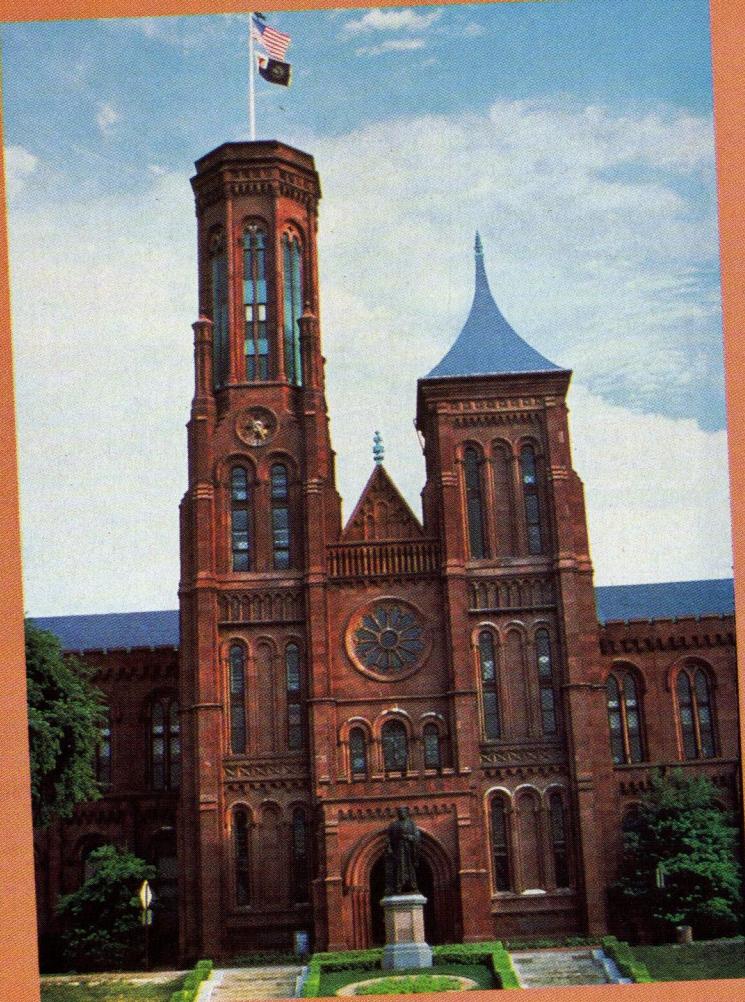
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HISTORY TODAY

news of the past



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION CASTLE DESIGNED BY JAMES RENWICK

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Although the official anniversary is not until August, the Smithsonian Institution—America's system of national museums—begins celebrating its 150th anniversary on January 1 with the opening in the "Castle" of "Smithson's Gift," an exhibition on the bequest by James Smithson (1765-1829) of Great Britain that led to the establishment of the first Smithsonian museum in Washington, D.C. A traveling display—"America's Smithsonian"—will open on February 9 in Los Angeles and tour 12 U.S. cities during a two-year period, offering a glimpse of the Institution's 16 museums, galleries, and the National Zoo. Many other exhibits and events are planned throughout 1996, with

the major anniversary celebration scheduled for August 10, when the Smithsonian will host a public birthday party on the Mall that will feature music, entertainment, and a fireworks display over the Washington Monument.

Smithson, a British scientist, provided in his will that, in the event his nephew died without heirs—as he did in 1835—the balance of his estate should go "to the United States of America, to found at Washington, under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." In 1836, Congress accepted the bequest, which in U.S. funds of the day amounted to more than \$500,000. After ten years of wran-

gling, Congress passed and President James K. Polk signed into law the act creating the Smithsonian Institution. Work began on the first museum building, the red sandstone Castle, in 1847. Today, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex. For information call 202-357-2700.

TENNESSEE 200

Throughout 1996, Tennessee will celebrate the bicentennial of its 1796 entrance into the Union with a year of festivities and projects. In Nashville, the unobstructed north and northwestern views of the Greek-revival capitol building are to be protected by construction of the Bicentennial Capitol Mall, a 19-acre outdoor history museum honoring the state's 95 counties. Among the features of this permanent monument to the anniversary are a two-hundred-foot granite map of the state, a two-thousand-seat amphitheater, and a wall of history highlighting important achievements in Tennessee's past.

Beginning in the spring, a train will visit forty locations in the state taking the Tennessee 200 Exposition to the people. The train will feature interactive, multi-media exhibits and displays dealing with significant aspects of the state's commerce and industry. Other history-related projects include the Archives Program, through which Tennessee 200 and the State Library and Archives will work with local historical agencies on a long-term plan for the preservation of the state's documentary heritage; Tennessee Heritage Trails, a project to preserve and promote important aspects of state history; and a celebration of women's history and the role women played in transforming Tennessee during the last two centuries. For information on all events and projects call 800-200-TENN (8366).

UTAH CENTENNIAL

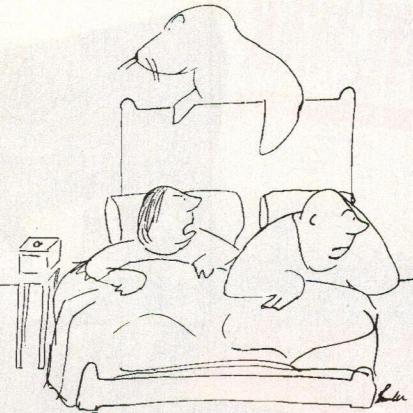
Utah marks its hundredth anniversary of statehood in 1996 with thousands of



events, including a January 4 re-enactment in Salt Lake City of the announcement of President Grover Cleveland's 1896 proclamation that finally granted statehood. The Utah Centennial Commission has planned numerous projects that will leave a lasting legacy for the state's future. In one such undertaking, the "Old Desert Village" in This is the Place State Park (formerly Pioneer Trail State Park), which commemorates the entrance of Mormon pioneers into the Great Salt Lake Valley in 1847, will be enhanced by construction of more than twenty period buildings. Other "legacy projects" include research into important topics in state history; restoration of significant buildings and monuments; preservation of Native-American sites; creation of interactive computer programs for visitors to the state; and the commissioning of artistic works. For more information on all Utah's 1996 events and projects call 801-531-1996.

ALGONQUIN HONORS THURBER

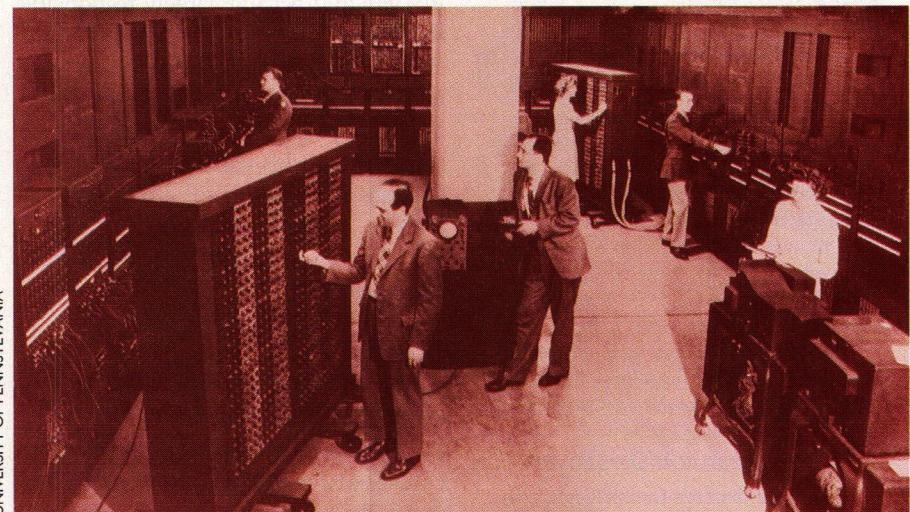
During a recent top-to-bottom renovation, the venerable Algonquin Hotel, which opened in New York City in 1902, created a "signature suite" dedicated to American



"All right, have it your way — you heard a seal bark."

CARTOON © 1932, 1960 JAMES THURBER

humorist and cartoonist James Thurber (1894-1961) [see November/December 1994 issue]. The suite is decorated with memorabilia from Thurber's life and career, including such items as his 1902 second-grade report card; family photographs; reproductions of some of his



THE ENIAC COMPUTER, PRESPER ECKERT AND JOHN W. MAUCHLY IN FOREGROUND

immortal cartoons; and a Milton Caniff signed lithograph portrait.

Thurber, a longtime Algonquin resident, was also a member of the "Round Table," a group of well-known figures associated with *New Yorker* magazine—Robert Benchley, Alexander Woollcott, and Dorothy Parker, among others—who met at the Algonquin for lunch and conversation during the 1920s with such other literary luminaries as playwright George S. Kaufman and newsman Heywood Broun. Hotel guests can reserve the Thurber Suite and other signature suites relating to the era at no additional charge. For more information call 212-840-6800.

BIRTH OF THE INFORMATION AGE

Fifty years ago, on February 14, 1946, John William Mauchly and John Presper Eckert gave the first demonstration

of the Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer (ENIAC) to scientists and industrialists gathered at the University of Pennsylvania's Moor School of Electrical Engineering. Throughout 1996, the university and its home-city of Philadelphia will commemorate this "birth of the information age" with events and exhibits at 22 trade shows

and conventions related to information technology. Sometime during the summer, the city's Franklin Institute (215-448-1152) will open "Inside Information," a \$7-million permanent exhibition that will explain key scientific concepts of information technology and demonstrate the potential of its extraordinary tools. Also this summer, the University of Pennsylvania (215-898-8721) will lead a series of international symposia exploring the impact of information technology on society.

Developed in secrecy during World War II, ENIAC—basically a collection of twenty electronic adding machines called "accumulators"—was touted as being able to multiply 360 ten-digit numbers or extract a square root "in a single second." When turned on, the huge, room-size computer used so much power that it caused lights in nearby towns to dim. For information on city programs call 1-800-537-7676. ★

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by Alonzo L. Hamby (Oxford University Press, 760 pages, \$35.00). In this substantial biography, Hamby recounts the public and private demeanor of Harry S. Truman (1884-1972), who assumed office as thirty-third president of the United States on the death of Franklin Roosevelt in 1945 and became largely responsible for shaping the post-World War II world. The author traces Truman's career from the family farmhouse in Independence, Missouri, to France during World War I, then through his early political life and explosive presidency to semi-retirement and his involvement with the Harry S. Truman presidential library, which opened in 1957.

involved, soldiers' diaries and letters, and oral histories handed down by many of the Native Americans who fought in the war.

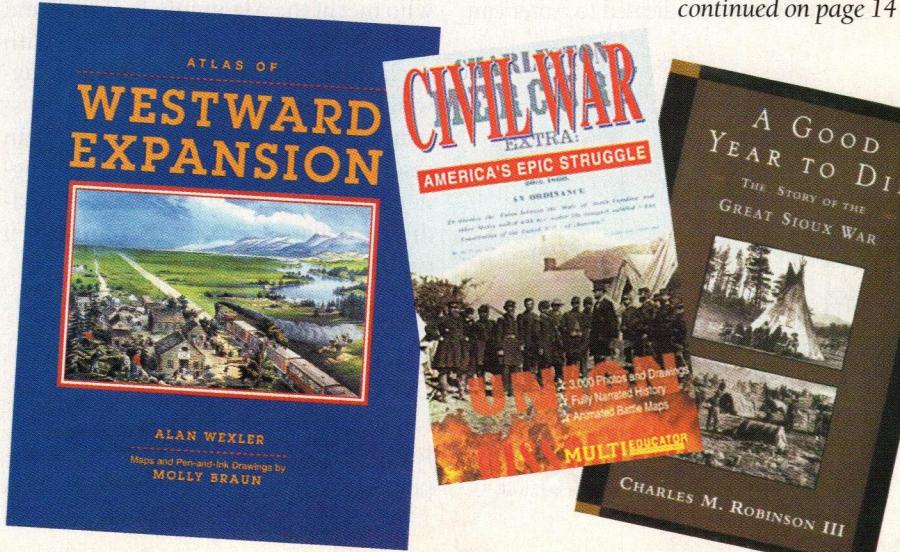
CIVIL WAR: AMERICA'S EPIC STRUGGLE

(Multi Educator Inc., \$79.95). The drama of the American Civil War comes to life in this two CD-ROM collection for Macintosh and Windows. The causes, battles, and personalities of the war are highlighted in more than two hours of narration, complemented by some three thousand photographs, one hundred maps, and period music.

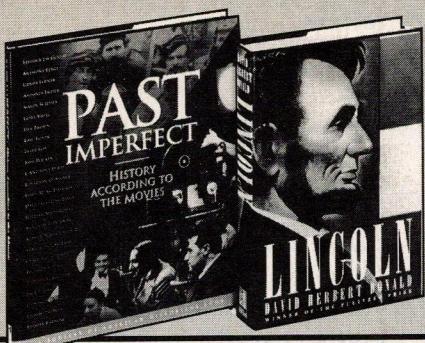
ATLAS OF WESTWARD EXPANSION

by Alan Wexler, maps and pen-and-ink drawings by Molly Braun (Facts on File, Inc., 288 pages, \$40.00). With the aid of period maps, drawings, photographs, and artworks, as well as Braun's specially commissioned maps and sketches, Wexler traces the history and expansion of the United States from 1750 up to the early twentieth century, when the last western territories were admitted into the Union. In recounting the story of how the United States formed its present boundaries, the author shows how diverse events fused together to shape the country's geographic history.

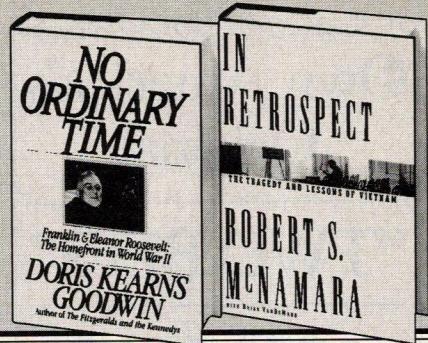
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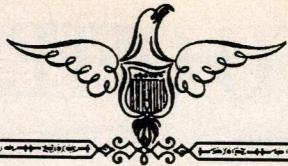
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AT LEAST ONE HESSIAN “DEMOCRATIZED”

I was impressed by the similarity of attempts to “democratize” Hessian prisoners of war during the Revolutionary War, as described in your November/December 1995 issue, and the attempts made with German prisoners during World War II, as recorded in the June 1995 issue of *Smithsonian*.

I know of one instance in which the policy may have worked. My ancestor, John Ferneau, was a Hessian (actually from Amsterdam) who surrendered with General Charles Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1781. Family lore has it that he was held for ransom, which no one paid. So he stayed.

Donald R. DeWitt
Flagstaff, Arizona

ORIGINAL TYPE RECOVERED

The article on Sequoyah [November/December 1995 issue] brought back many exciting memories. I participated in the excavation of the New Echota site in Georgia during 1954 and '55. We recovered the original type that later was set and used to print a facsimile of the *Cherokee Phoenix* for a national convention of newspaper editors, writers, and publishers.

Thank you for this and the many other fine articles you bring for our edification.

Virginia Hamilton
Rome, Georgia

U.S. NAVY DESERVES CREDIT

I was surprised that none of the experts who gave their opinions as to why the South lost the Civil War mentioned the role of the United States Navy (other than the gentleman who mentioned the Battle of Mobile Bay) [September/October 1995 issue].

Though the primary role of the navy was not glamorous, it was devastating. Bit by bit, the navy closed the South to international trade and communication,

smothering the Confederacy. No combination of Confederate field commanders could overcome the fatal coastal blockade. The seas were life, and the Union controlled the seas.

Likewise, the United States Navy was largely responsible for slicing the Confederacy in half through its Mississippi campaigns. Never forget the roles the navy played in the Fort Donelson campaign, the Battle of Shiloh, and several others. In short, the South was doomed from the beginning for want of a navy. Of the many political and military reasons for the Confederacy's defeat, never underestimate the contribution of the U.S. Navy.

Mike Martling
Spangle, Washington

ARMIES LOSE FOR THREE REASONS

Here we go again—experts debating why the South lost the Civil War [September/October 1995 issue].

The simple fact is that armies tend to lose for three reasons—they run out of people, food, and supplies. When your soldiers are dead or captured and there are no replacements, it's time to quit. When the enemy overtakes the countryside, cutting off the supply of food to the cities, the general populace, and your troops, it's time to quit. When the enemy further destroys your manufacturing centers, cutting off supplies and weapons, it's time to quit.

All these factors, to one degree or another, explain why the Confederates.

Tim Korver
Hamilton, Ohio

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The editors welcome comments from our readers. We endeavor to publish a representative sampling of correspondence but regret that limited space prevents us from printing every letter. Address correspondence to “Mailbox,” American History, Box 8200, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105. ★



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HISTORY BOOKSHELF

continued from page 10

EASTLAND:**LEGACY OF THE "TITANIC"**

by George W. Hilton (Stanford University Press, 364 pages, \$45.00). More than a hundred photographs, drawings, maps, and diagrams accompany Hilton's riveting account of the July 1915 capsizing of the steamer *Eastland* in the Chicago River, with the loss of more than eight hundred lives. Chartered to carry employees of the Western Electric Company and their families on an excursion cruise, the *Eastland* was still tied to the dock at the time of the accident. The three-deck veteran of Great Lakes travel had recently been fitted with three additional lifeboats and six rafts due to revelations that the British passenger liner *Titanic*—which hit an iceberg and sank in April 1912, taking about 1,500 people to their deaths—had carried insufficient lifeboats. The author reveals how this latest of several modifications made since the *Eastland's* 1903 construction compromised the vessel's stability and, ironically, set the stage for what is still one of the worst maritime disasters in American history.

THE FALL OF THE PACKARD MOTOR CAR COMPANY

by James A. Ward (Stanford University Press, 300 pages, \$35.00). Questions raised by the puzzling failure of the Packard Motor Car Company in 1956—right in the midst of the great boom in the automobile industry—are answered by Ward in this new book. One of the most prestigious automobile manufacturers in the United States for 59 years, Packard was, according to the author, more than a victim of bad luck, though fortune did play a role. Ward demonstrates that the "independent" manufacturer also failed to cope with the postwar vitality of the Big Three automakers—Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors—and suffered numerous significant reverses just as those competitors were putting a car in every American garage.

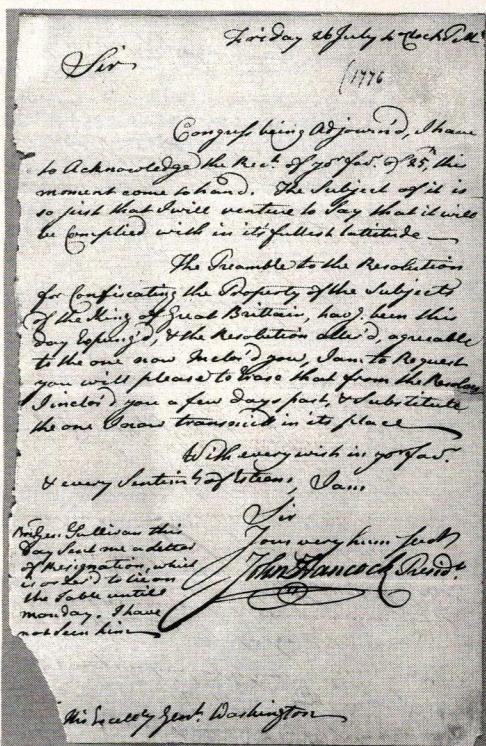
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EARLY INNINGS: A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF BASEBALL, 1825-1908

edited by Dean A. Sullivan (University of Nebraska Press, 312 pages, \$47.00). In his introduction to this documentary history of baseball's formative years, Benjamin G. Rader comments that many people "assume that the game really took hold around 1900 with the creation of the current major league system and the playing of a World Series. [In fact, it] had become an integral part of American life long before the turn of the century." Presented chronologically, the 120 documents collected here from newspaper accounts, letters, folk poetry, songs, and annual guides demonstrate how the game, which is today a big business, evolved from a loosely organized, village social event in the pre-Civil War era to the 1876 arrival of the National League, which signalled baseball's new place as a commercial enterprise. *

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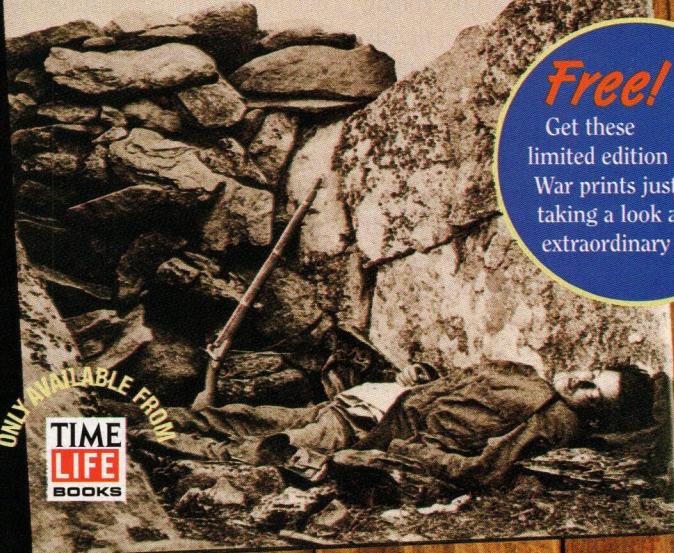
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WILLIAM W. BROWN

AT JUST AFTER 8 P.M. on February 2, 1857, an air of expectancy gripped the crowd assembled in the town hall in the little village of Salem, Ohio. The audience leaned forward in their seats, eager to catch a glimpse of the middle-aged black man who strode confidently onto the stage. William Wells Brown, the object of their curiosity, cleared his throat and began to recite from *Experience, or How to Give a Northern Man a Backbone*, the first play authored by an African American.*

For almost a year, Brown had traveled about the Northeast reading his drama, which dealt with the evils of slavery and urged the abolitionists in attendance to do something about the plight of blacks held in bondage. No copies of this 1856 play have survived, but fortunately, his second such work, *The Escape, or A Leap For Freedom*, fared better following its 1858 publication.

These two plays—the only ones known to have been written by Brown—represented only a tiny portion of his literary achievements. Virtually illiterate in his youth, Brown went on to become a historian, an essayist, a journalist, and a lecturer, as well as America's first black novelist, playwright, and travel-book author.

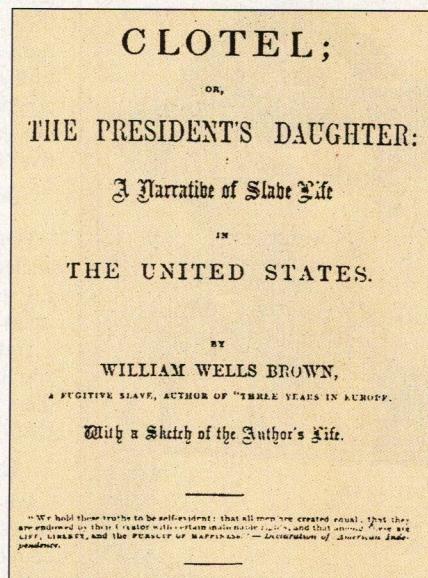
Born near Lexington, Kentucky, sometime between 1813 and 1815, William was the son of Elizabeth, a slave on a farm owned by Dr. John Young. His father was George Higgins, Young's half-brother or cousin.

In 1816, Dr. Young moved to Missouri with his family and slaves, settling in Saint Charles County on the northern shore of the Missouri River. Four years later, Young went off to serve in the state's first legislature, leaving his farm in the hands of overseer Grove Cook, a

*Brown may have originally entitled this work *The Dough Face*.

cruel man who made frequent use of the whip. In his autobiography, William described a beating that his mother received, remembering that "cold chills ran over me, and I wept aloud."

While William was still a boy, the Young's took an infant nephew into their home. Since his name too was William,



they changed the young slave's name to Sanford. The youth did not take losing his only possession—his name—lightly and endured several beatings for persisting in calling himself William.

Light skinned, William also found himself at the wrong end of the lash when people mistook him for a member of the Young family, a resemblance that was obviously beyond his control. This question of skin color caused William to suffer the scorn of some fellow slaves as well. As he later wrote, "the nearer a slave approaches an Anglo-Saxon in complexion the more he is abused by both owner and fellow-slaves. The owner flogs him to keep him 'in his place,' and the slaves hate him on account of his being whiter than themselves."

When Dr. Young moved to St. Louis in 1827, he hired William out to work in a variety of jobs. In his first book, *Narrative of William Wells Brown, A Fugitive Slave*, William wrote of his treatment at the hands of a tavern keeper named Major Freeland, a drunkard who severely beat the then-teenager. After brief stints working on a steamboat and at the Missouri Hotel in the city, William was hired by Elijah P. Lovejoy, editor of the *St. Louis Times*. There for only a brief time, William was nonetheless able to acquire the rudiments of an education.

In 1832, William was put in the employ of James Walker, a slave trader, for one year and was forced to take part in the transportation of fellow slaves down river for auction. By the time William's distasteful service to Walker had expired, Dr. Young found himself in financial difficulty. To ease his situation, he made plans to sell William, despite an earlier promise to Higgins that he never would sell his son. Regretful that such a move was necessary, Young gave William a week to find a new owner. Instead, William talked his mother into trying to flee to Canada. Against her better judgement, Elizabeth agreed.

Eleven days later the pair was captured in Illinois; Elizabeth was sold into the deep South and never saw her son again. William was sold for \$500.00 to a St. Louis tailor, Samuel Willi, who hired him out as a servant on a steamboat. Less than a year later, Willi sold William to a

With the publication of *Clotel: or, The President's Daughter* (above, left) 19 years after he escaped from slavery, William Wells Brown (right) became the first African-American novelist. During his lifetime, he also wrote a "slave narrative," two plays, a travel book, and works on the history of blacks in America.

BY MARSH CASSADY AFTER HIS 1834 ESCAPE TO FREEDOM, FUGITIVE SLAVE WILLIAM WELLS BROWN USED HIS LITERARY TALENTS FOR THE ABOLITIONIST CAUSE AND TO RECORD THE HISTORY OF AMERICA'S BLACKS.



merchant and riverboat owner, Enoch Price. When his new owner, acting as captain, took one of his boats to New Orleans and then to Cincinnati, in the free state of Ohio, he took William along.

On January 1, 1834, William carried a passenger's trunk ashore in Cincinnati. Seizing this chance to escape, he kept on walking and quickly made his way out of the city. For six days, he wandered by himself during the night hours, ill-clothed for the winter weather and without food.

Nearly frozen and sick with a fever, he finally approached a man who "had on a broad-brimmed hat and a very long coat, and was obviously walking for exercise. As soon as I saw him, and observed his dress, I thought to myself, 'You are the man that I have been looking for!' Nor was I mistaken. He was the very man!"

Wells Brown, a Quaker, gave the youth shelter and food, and cared for him until he was well. On learning that William had no family name, he offered his own, and the runaway slave became William Wells Brown.

With a new name and a fresh start in a free state, the light-skinned William traveled to Cleveland, where he worked at odd jobs until navigation resumed on the Great Lakes in the spring. When shipping again opened up, William found employment as a steward on a Lake Erie steamer, the *Detroit*.

That same year, he met and married Elizabeth Schooner, whom he called Betsey. The couple's first child died not long after birth, but they had two more daughters, Clarissa and Josephine.**

During the nine years he plied the

**William and Elizabeth Brown's marriage lasted only until 1848. In February 1860, he wed Annie Elizabeth Gray; they had two children—Clotelle and William Wells, Junior.

lakes, William taught himself to read and write, and helped other fugitives escape to freedom in Canada. By 1840, Brown and his family had moved to Buffalo, New York, and made their home a stop on the Underground Railway; 69 runaways made good their escape through Brown's efforts during 1842 alone.

Soon after his arrival in Buffalo, Brown organized the Union Total Abstinence Society and began his association with the Western New York Anti-Slavery Society. He lectured for the abolitionist cause, using his speeches to attack America's idea of democracy, which he felt only existed for whites, and the hypocrisy of using re-

was strengthened, making it dangerous for Brown to return home. William, therefore, chose to remain abroad. With England as his base, he spent the next four years traveling throughout Great Britain and to Europe, giving lectures about the slavery question and completing three more books. The first—*A Description of William Wells Brown's Panoramic Views of the Scenes in the Life of an American Slave, from His Birth in Slavery to His Death or His Escape to His First Home of Freedom on British Soil*—consisted of stories and a series of 24 sketches, which were drawn by artists at his direction.

Three Years in Europe: or, Places I have

"BROWN BELIEVED THAT FREEDOM cannot be bought and sold, but is a divine and moral right."

ligion to ensure the docility of slaves.

Although a speech he delivered before the Female Anti-Slavery Society of Salem, Massachusetts, in 1847 was his first published work, his first book was his "slave narrative," a popular genre of the period, which was released that same year. In the two years following its publication, the biography went through four editions. While this work did show the influence of previously published slave narratives, Brown's was unique in its inclusion of cases other than his own to point up the overwhelming cruelty of slavery.

After seeing a copy of William's slave narrative, Enoch Price, his former owner, wrote in 1848 offering William his freedom for \$325.00. Brown refused, firm in his belief that freedom can not be bought or sold but is a divine and moral right. "God," he declared, "made me as free as he did Enoch Price," and therefore, not a penny would be paid for his freedom "with my consent."

A year later, he published *The Anti-Slavery Harp: A Collection of Songs for Anti-Slavery Meetings*, a compilation of 46 pieces to be sung to familiar melodies. He gave a series of anti-slavery presentations throughout New England, illustrating the evils of involuntary servitude by presenting two escaped slaves from Georgia, William and Ellen Craft. And, he traveled to France in August 1849 as the American Peace Society's delegate to the International Peace Congress in Paris.

In 1850, the 1793 Fugitive Slave Law

Seen and People I have Met, published in 1852, was a compilation of 23 letters Brown had written since his arrival there, comparing the freedom of life in Europe to the tyranny faced by blacks in America. The book was well received, one reviewer noting that Brown wrote "with ease and ability, and his intelligent observations upon the great question to which he has devoted, and is devoting, his life, will command influence and respect."

Brown's novel, *Cloet: or, The President's Daughter: A Narrative of Slave Life in the United States*, was published in London in 1853. The book took its title from allegations that Thomas Jefferson had fathered several mixed-race children, whom he then abandoned to slavery. Published about a year after Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, however, Brown's work failed to create much of a stir or garner critical acclaim.

While abroad, Brown also used his time to become versed in the practice of medicine. In a day when formal training still was not required for doctors, he attended lectures and conducted private study, gradually obtaining sufficient knowledge to become a medical practitioner. Instead of pursuing that profession, however, he continued to devote himself to the anti-slavery cause.

In 1854, Brown finally agreed to purchase his freedom so that he might return to the United States and fight more effectively for the abolition of the "most

cruel system of oppression that ever blackened the character or hardened the heart of man."

Soon after he arrived in America, Brown published *The American Fugitive in Europe*, an enlarged version of his *Three Years in Europe*. This new edition was the first book written by Brown to be reviewed by a major American newspaper. *The New York Daily Tribune* declared that the work was a "lively and entertaining record of foreign travel" and, due to its origins, a worthy "novelty in literature."

During the Civil War, Brown joined fellow abolitionists Frederick Douglass and T. Morris Chester in recruiting in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey for the all-black 54th Massachusetts Regiment. The war years also saw publication of Brown's first historical work, *The Black Man: His Antecedents, His Genius, and His Achievements*. An anthology of biographical sketches of blacks with significant accomplishments to their credit, this work went through ten editions in just three years.

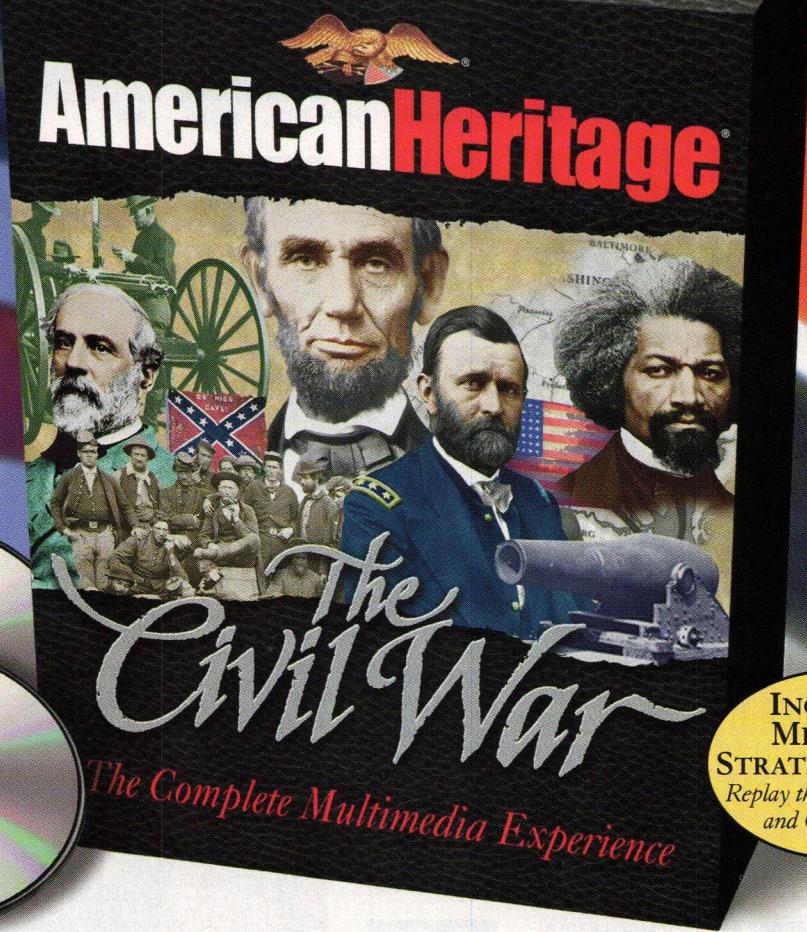
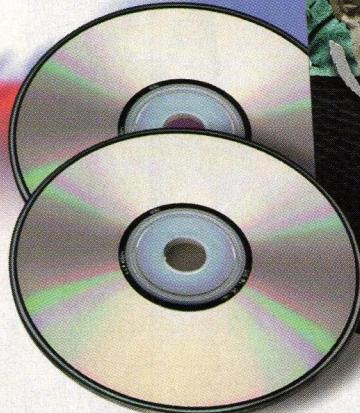
Two years after the war, Brown brought out *The Negro in the American Rebellion, His Heroism and His Fidelity*. And in 1874, he published his most complete and important historical undertaking, *The Rising Son; or, The Antecedents and Advancements of the Colored Race*, which traced the roots of America's blacks from Africa. As he had in his previous histories, Brown strongly refuted the era's belief in the inferiority of the black race.

William Wells Brown died in Chelsea, Massachusetts, in 1884. Despite his literary achievements and his many contributions in the struggle for freedom and equality, he was buried in an unmarked grave in the Cambridge, Massachusetts, cemetery.

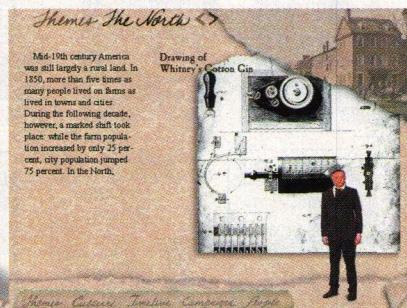
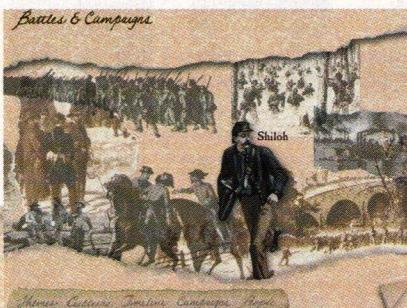
He was eulogized in the Boston newspapers as "one of the most intelligent, earnest and active members of the little band of oldtime abolitionists" and as a "prolific writer, commanding a clear intellect and facile pen . . ." Brown, who spent his last years fighting for improved education for black children, did his utmost throughout his life to combat racial prejudice and its resulting indignities, consistently emphasizing the need for cooperation among people of all races. ★

Freelance writer Marsh Cassady of San Diego, California, is the author of 41 books.

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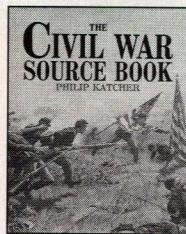


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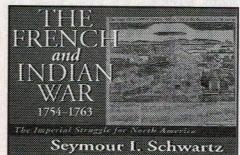
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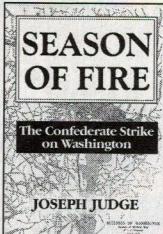
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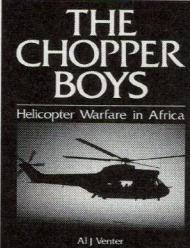
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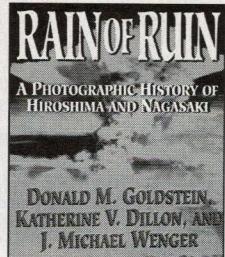
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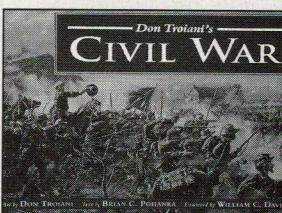
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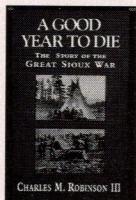
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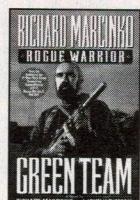
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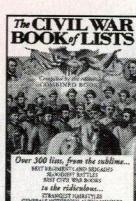
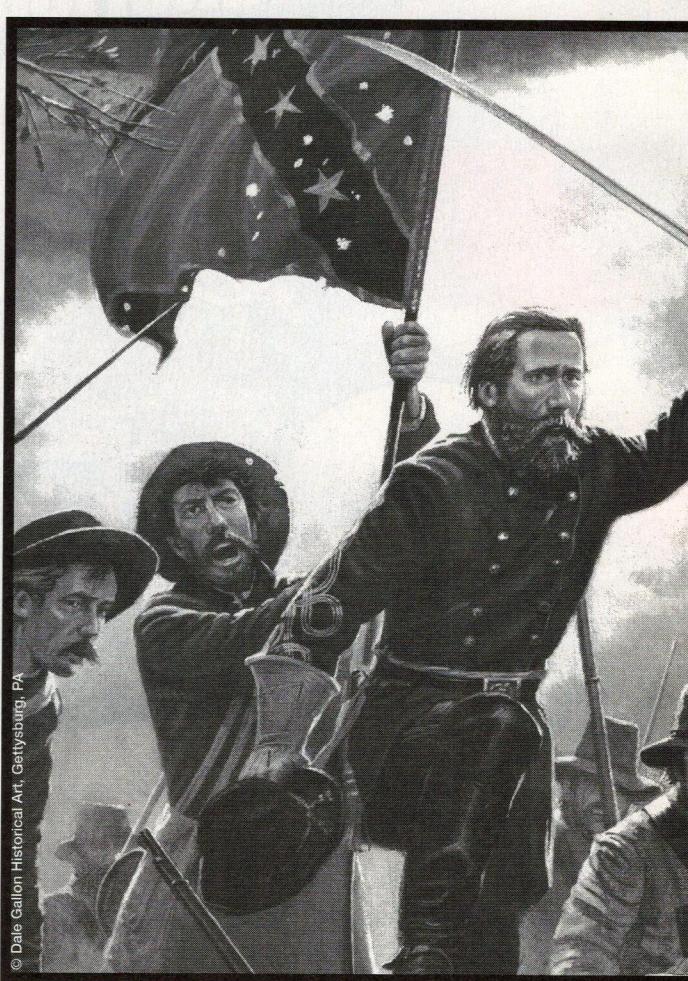
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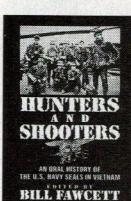
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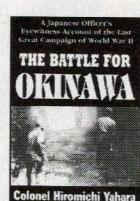
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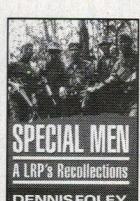
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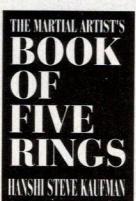
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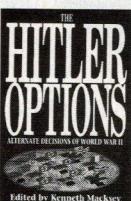
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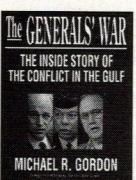
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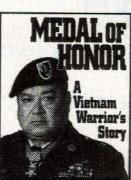
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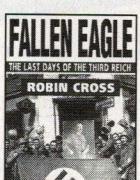
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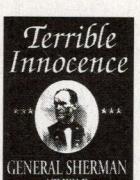
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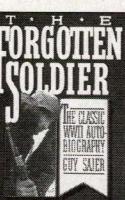
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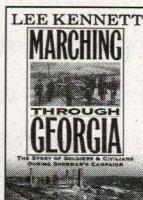
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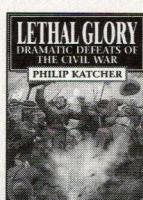
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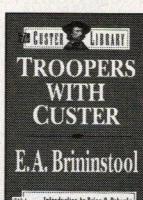
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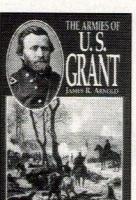
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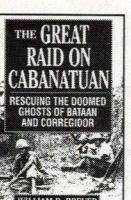
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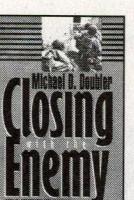
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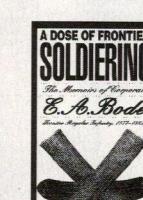
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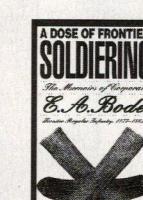
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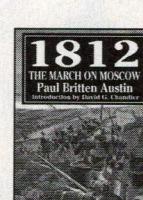
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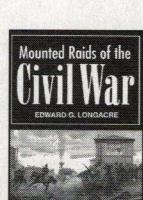
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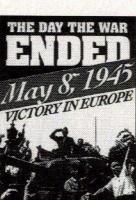
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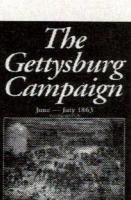
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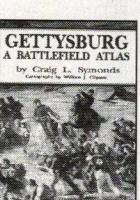
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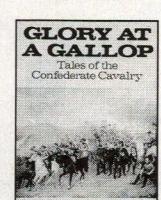
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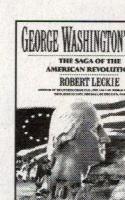
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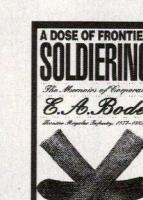
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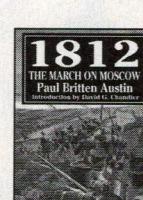
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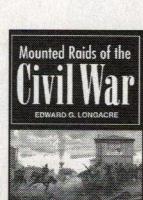
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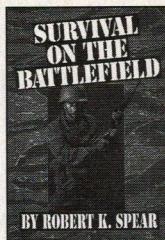


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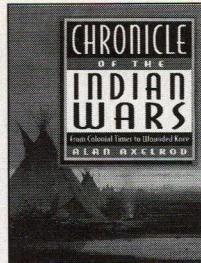
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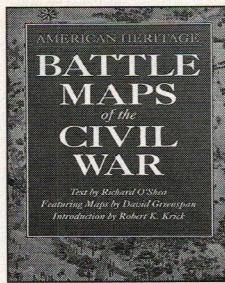
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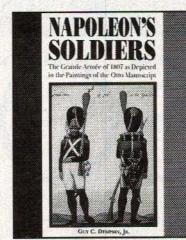
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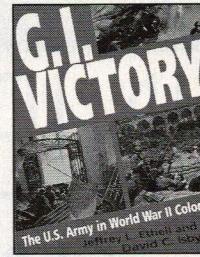
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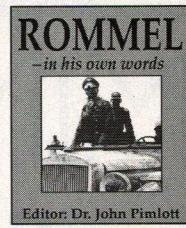
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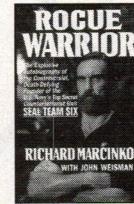
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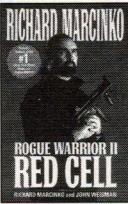
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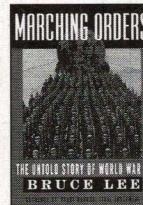
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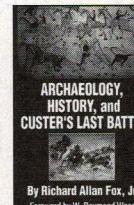
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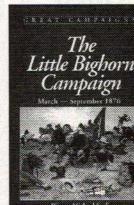
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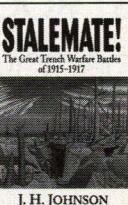
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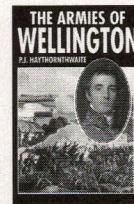
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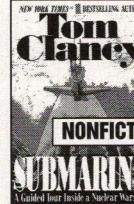
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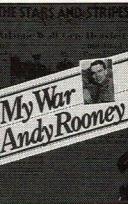
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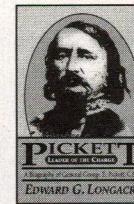
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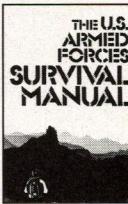
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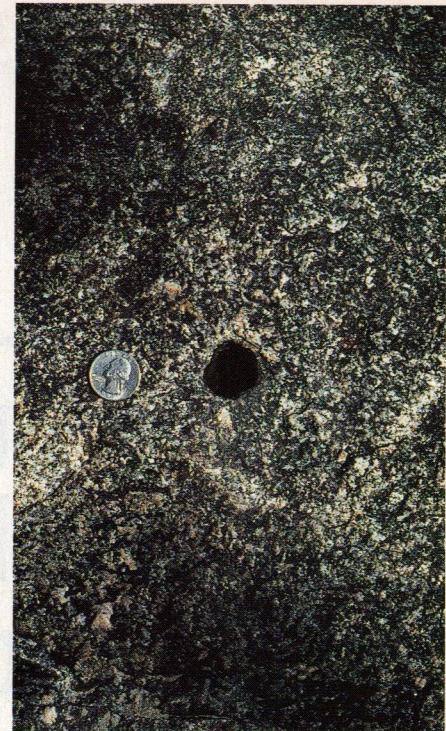
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MINNESOTA'S VIKINGS

BY ROGER PINCKNEY EVER SINCE ITS REPORTED DISCOVERY ON A MINNESOTA FARM IN 1898, THE KENSINGTON RUNESTONE HAS STIRRED DEBATE.



AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY MUSEUM

NO ONE KNOWS where the stories started, these tales of ancient Vikings in Minnesota, 1,400 miles from the Atlantic Ocean. Perhaps they came over with the immigrants, fragments of dimly remembered sagas of Erik the Red or Leif the Lucky. Perhaps they were made up by people separated from their beloved fjords and mountains and seeking to unite old and new lands with a common past.

Perhaps the stories are true. Vikings did have a way of turning up in unusual places. They stole the northwest quarter of France, where Norsemen became Norman and their purloined territory became Normandy. They laid siege to the city of Paris and rowed their ships up the rivers of central Europe, settling in what is now the Russian Federation. They traveled to the British Isles, where evidence of their occupation can be seen today. They also moved into Iceland, and from there, they colonized the coast of Greenland in the tenth century. And from Greenland . . . ?

Archaeologists have positively identified the ruins of a Viking settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows, on the northeastern tip of Canada's Newfoundland. Best estimates date that site at about A.D. 1000, nearly five hundred years before Christopher Columbus, sailing in the service of Spain in 1492, thought he had found India in the Caribbean Sea.

So it should not severely strain the limits of archaeological speculation to find the intrepid Norse wanderers attempting to get into Hudson Bay. And the rivers that flow from the bay lead upstream into present-day Manitoba and Ontario, Canada, and to Minnesota, home of the famous Kensington Runestone, by far the most spectacular and controversial piece of evidence supporting the Norse exploration of North America.

The fabled voyages of the Vikings, depicted in this N. C. Wyeth painting (bottom, left), are the stuff of legend. Their exploits are known to have taken them to the eastern reaches of Europe and across the Atlantic to Canada. Reported discoveries of mooring stones (top, left) and a fourteenth-century runestone (above, right) around the turn of this century have fueled debate over the possibility that Norsemen traveled the inland waters of North America as far west as Minnesota.

In 1898, an immigrant farmer, Olaf Ohman, was grubbing stumps for a new pasture near the village of Kensington, in Douglas County, Minnesota, when he found a 202-pound slab entwined in the roots of an aspen tree. "The stone," he later testified in an affidavit, "lay just beneath the surface of the ground in a slightly slanting position, with one cor-

In the meantime, Ohman had crated up the stone and shipped it off to Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, where scholars carefully examined it, pronounced the inscription a "clumsy fraud," and promptly returned the stone to its finder.

Nine years later, historian Hjalmar R. Holand, in Minnesota to conduct research into Norwegian immigration, heard stories of the stone and went to investigate. He found the controversial artifact in Ohman's yard.* Given the reaction of the scholars who had examined the inscription, Holand "assumed that [it] was spurious. . . ." Nonetheless, he persuaded Ohman to part with the stone, "thinking it would be an interesting souvenir and exemplification of my favorite subject of study." Despite his early misgivings, Holand spent the next three years rendering the runes into English—and the rest of his life defending their authenticity.

Holand's translation of the inscription reads: "[We are] 8 Goths and 22 Norwegians on [an] exploration-journey from Vinland** through (or across) the West We had camp by [a lake with] 2 skerries one days-journey north from this stone We were [out] and fished one day After we came home [we] found 10 [of our] men red with blood and dead AV[e] M[aria] Save [us] from evil[.]". A second inscription on the edge of the stone reads: "[We] have 10 [of our party] by the sea to look after our ships [or ship] 14 days-journey from this island [in the] year [of our Lord] 1362."

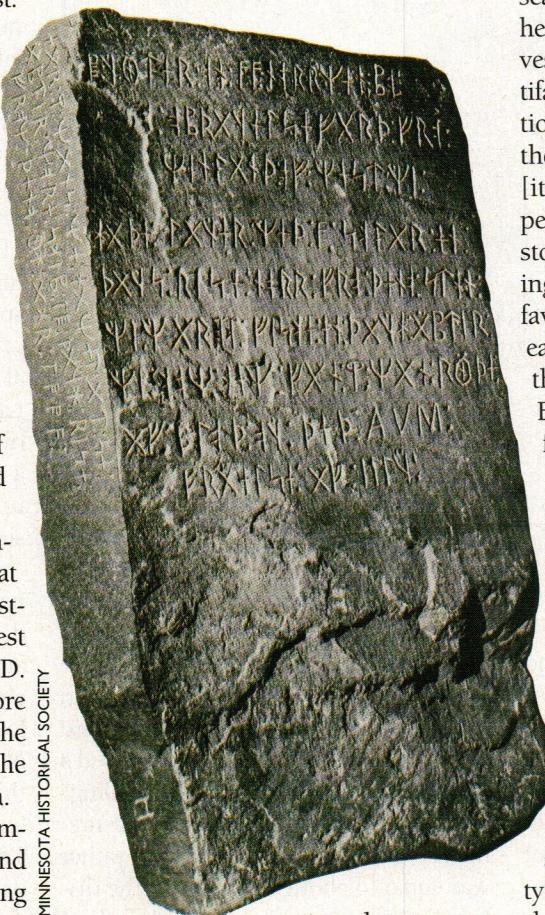
Before he had personally decided on the authenticity of the inscription, Holand became convinced that "true or false, it had been condemned largely on erroneous premises." The objection that the language of the stone was not Old Norse, for example, was irrelevant, he felt, since Old Norse ceased being the language of Sweden and much of Norway well before 1362.

But skeptics' objections were broader than language; they pounced on every detail found in the inscription. What

ner almost protruding. The two largest roots of the tree clasped the stone in such a manner that the stone must have been there at least as long as the tree."

Not knowing what to make of the strange markings on the stone, he assumed them to be Indian pictographs. He hauled the rock into town, where it was put on display in the bank window. Some of the passers-by in this largely Scandinavian-American area concluded that the chiseled characters resembled Norse runes, an ancient and nearly forgotten Germanic script that they had seen in books.

Someone sent a copy of the inscription to O. J. Breda, a professor of Scandinavian languages at the University of Minnesota. After six weeks of careful study, Professor Breda pronounced the inscription a hoax.



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

* Holand wrote that the stone was being used as a step into the granary when he found it. This claim, however, was later disputed by three of Ohman's sons.

** The unidentified coastal region of northeast North America visited by the Vikings as early as the eleventh century.

sea, they asked, was 14 days from Kensington, Minnesota? What could possibly compel these seafarers to leave the relative safety of their ship and journey nearly eight hundred miles into the territory of the warlike Sioux? How did the

aspen tree's roots, the stone must have been in the ground for too long a period for the inscription to have been the work of a Scandinavian immigrant.

Point by point, Holand answered his detractors' arguments against the runic

smooth seas and a fair wind on a given day. Understood this way, according to Holand, "14 days' sailing" placed the ships in the vicinity of Hudson Bay.

In order to determine if the same 75-mile distance could be applied to the second use of the term "day's journey" in the inscription, Holand set out in 1919 to look for a lake with "two skerries," or rocky inlets, 75 miles or so north of Kensington. After searching lake-abundant Becker County for several days, he came to Cormorant Lake. There, he found the two skerries that he had been looking for. They were, he said, "such an unusual phenomena that one can well understand why the writer of the inscription recalled them in seeking to make a pithy description of the spot where his friends had perished."

A few months later, Holand and several colleagues returned to Cormorant Lake, where they were led by the present owner of the land to a "stone which had a strange-looking hole chiseled in its upper surface." Two more stones with similar holes were discovered nearby.

The nature of the holes—they were narrow, triangular, and seven-inches deep—immediately ruled out their creation by the elements. Several theories about the purpose of the holes were put forward, but the weathered appearance of their interiors indicated to Holand that they had been drilled too long ago for any of these explanations to be valid. This led him to contend that the boulders themselves were "mooring stones" such as those used in Europe by ancient

stone "just happen" to turn up in a Scandinavian-American community?

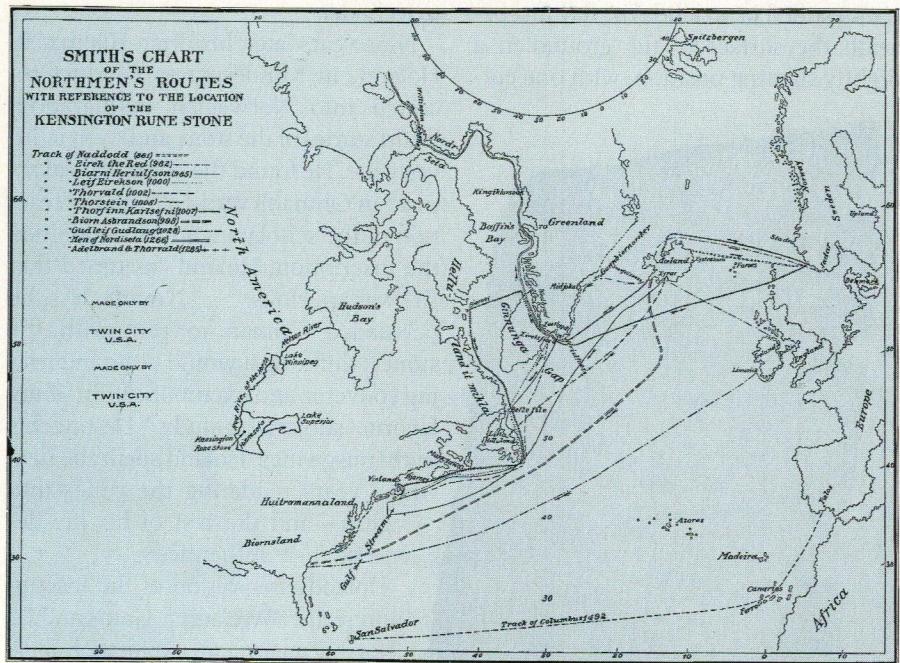
Critics also noted that, by the second half of the fourteenth century, the Norse had largely given up using runic symbols. Norway, Sweden, and Denmark had been fully Christianized, and their official documents were written in Latin. Runes became suspect because they were part of the pagan past. Any literate person writing in 1362, they maintained, would likely have written in Latin.

Holand and his supporters went on the defensive. A committee established by the Norwegian Society in Minneapolis concluded that none of those involved with finding the stone had carved the inscription and that, given its condition and its entanglement in the

symbols themselves. Then he turned his attention to the description of events narrated on the stone.

On the question of distance, Holand cited a 1914 work by William Hovgaard in which he noted that Norsemen used a unit of distance known as a "day's sailing" that was not the standard time measurement consisting of 24 hours, but rather was equal to about 75 miles, or the distance a Viking ship could travel in

In addition to tracing Viking voyages between A.D. 861 and 1285, the undated chart shown above pinpoints the location of the runestone's discovery in Minnesota. Both Olaf Ohman (front row, second from left)—the stone's finder—and Hjalmar Holand (front row, third from left)—who spent his life trying to prove its authenticity—are among the "Gentlemen for the Runestone" present for this 1927 photograph (right).



Vikings to tether their ships. The holes would have been drilled to hold the ringed, iron spuds to which they would tie their vessels.

To Holand's mind, it all made sense—the camp where the Vikings found "ten men red with blood and dead" some six hundred years before was probably located on top of the hill from which both skerries were visible; the reference in the inscription to fishing suggested that the Vikings had boats, which they would have tied to mooring stones at the edge of the lake.

Holand continued working his way north and west toward the Red River, finding other lakeside boulders drilled with "anchor holes" along the way. Local farmers, Scandinavians all, began giving him artifacts—a spear point, several axe heads, a steel for striking fire from flint—that they reportedly uncovered on their land.

Researchers, meanwhile, got busy on the other side of the Atlantic. Royal records show that around 1355 Magnus Erickson, the king of Norway and Sweden who considered himself as a vigorous defender of the Christian faith, commis-

sioned Paul Knutson to select men from the royal bodyguard and other "retainers" and take a *knorr*, a sea-going cargo vessel, on a voyage westward to Greenland and Vinland. The king was most disturbed by reports that the colony had forsaken the Gospel and reverted to worshiping the old Norse gods. Some accounts state that the *knorr* returned in 1364, with only nine men left alive.

Were these nine men among the ten mentioned in the inscription on the side of the stone, who had been left by the salt sea to look after the ship? If so, what happened to those among the "8 Goths and 22 Norwegians" who survived the massacre at Cormorant Lake? Holand theorized that they were either hunted down and killed by the Sioux or sought refuge by marrying into the Mandan Indian tribe.

Holand and his supporters had little time to gloat over their successful research and convincing arguments. The battle was joined by Professor Johan A. Holvik of Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, whose research on the subject had left him skeptical of the authenticity of the Kensington stone.

Holvik invoked the shadowy figure of one Sven Fogelblad, whose name recurs frequently throughout the history of the Kensington stone controversy. A former clergyman and itinerant schoolteacher who died in 1897, Fogelblad owned the farm next to Ohman's, where the stone was discovered. A book belonging to Fogelblad, signed and dated "Stockholm 1868" on the flyleaf, was passed to Ohman by a neighbor after Fogelblad's death. It was a Swedish grammar book by Carl J. L. Almquist, which contained a runic alphabet.

Holvik borrowed a scrapbook from Ohman's home that had belonged to Fogelblad and then to the discoverer of the runestone. The scrapbook contained newspaper clippings, including several articles by "S. Fogelblad," that demonstrated Fogelblad's educational level and intelligence. Investigation into his past revealed that he came from a part of Sweden very familiar with runic symbols and that he had a considerable knowledge of languages. Given this and other evidence, Holvik concluded Fogelblad, who died in 1897, had concocted

continued on page 65

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Television programming's remarkable montage of art, entertainment, culture, and hokum offered viewers a window into the human condition. One scholar observed that just as the "printing press five centuries before had begun to democratize learning, now television

would democratize experience." Comedian Bob Hope called the new wonder "that piece of furniture that stares back at you."

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OCTOBER 29										
7:00 ② 73 TODAY Lasalle, Blair, 9:00 ② PASTOR'S STORY The Rev. Al- 10:00 ② 73 EDITORIAL Bill Burdett, 9:15 ② 73 EDITORIAL Jim Connolly, 9:30 ② 73 LIVING TODAY Political, 9:45 ② 73 JOHN MOORE 10:00 ② 73 MORNING NEWS W. Burdett, Guide to the First Amendment			11:15 ② 73 STARS ON PARADE 1:30 ② 73 KAY'S KITCHEN Kay Neumann, Goldie, Tami, Coronelos, Ivan Sanderson, 53 F.M. PLATTHOUSE 2:00 ② 73 JOHN MOORE Variety, Gues- t: Bill Wallace, moderator, 73 NEWS W. Burdett, 2:05 ② 73 DING DONG SCHOOL 3:00 ② 73 ARTHUR GODFREY TIME 3:15 ② 73 GLAMOUR Serial, 3:30 ② 73 THE LADIES FALLS Serial, 3:45 ② 73 YEARS ON PARADE 3:55 ② 73 THE BENNETT'S Serial, 4:10 ② 73 YOU EAT WHAT YOU SAW 4:25 ② 73 TRIKE IT RICH Warren Hell, 4:40 ② 73 THREE STEPS TO HEAVEN 4:55 ② 73 77 FOLLOW YOUR HEART 5:10 ② 73 VALIANT LADY Serial, 5:25 ② 73 MOVIE MINIATURE 5:40 ② 73 LUNCHEON TIME 5:55 ② 73 NOONTIME CAPERS 6:10 ② 73 NOONTIME COMICS 6:25 ② 73 LOVE OR LIFE Beanie 6:40 ② 73 27 SEARCH FOR TOMOR- ROW Serial, 7:00 ② 73 NEWS BRIEFLINES 7:15 ② 73 LAUGHING LIGHT Serial, 7:30 ② 73 MATINEE 7:45 ② 73 THIS IS AMERICA 1:00 ② 73 LET'S VISIT H. C. Cohen, 1:15 ② 73 YOU DON'T KNOW YOU EAT 1:30 ② 73 MATINEE MATINEE							
Thru Saturday, Oct. 24th			11:15 ② 73 WILL BUY THAT Mike 1:30 ② 73 VALIANT LADY Serial, 2:05 ② 73 SKETCHBOOK Serial, Tornillo, 2:30 ② 73 VALIANT LADY Serial, Neighbor What's Your Trouble? 2:45 ② 73 KITCHEN RECIPES Recipes, Quick Quiz, 3:00 ② 73 DOUBT OR NOTHING Quiz, 3:15 ② 73 BIG PAYOFF Quiz, 3:30 ② 73 KATE SMITH Musical, 3:45 ② 73 AS THE GIRLS FAMOUS Kath- aspian, Copeland, Paulinus Doro 4:00 ② 73 WELCOME TRAVELERS Tommy Bartlett, grand 4:15 ② 73 16 TURN OF THE FRIEND 4:30 ② 73 TIME IN THE AFTERNOON 4:45 ② 73 TIME FOR JANE GIBSON 5:00 ② 73 HOUSE FARM Art Farmer, 5:15 ② 73 COKE Eddie Fisher, 5:30 ② 73 7 ON YOUR ACCOUNT 5:45 ② 73 ERN WESTMOR SHOW 5:55 ② 73 WESTERN THEATER 6:10 ② 73 ADVENTURE TIME 6:25 ② 73 BOB CARR BABYSTAFF 6:40 ② 73 ADVENTURES Western , 6:55 ② 73 5 AT YODA SCAM Adventure, 7:10 ② 73 TO BE ANNOUNCED , 7:25 ② 73 GUNSMOKE Western, 7:40 ② 73 7000 TIME 7:55 ② 73 GABBY TALENT 8:10 ② 73 BOB HOPE DOODY 8:25 ② 73 CISCO KID Western, 8:40 ② 73 COMEDY TIME 8:55 ② 73 ADVENTURES "Don Winslow." 9:10 ② 73 CIVIC CALENDAR 9:25 ② 73 BUZZ 'N' BILL Music;							
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in research laboratories. It was in 1930 that the first public television broadcast was made in America.

During the thirties, the few hundred proud owners of television receivers had

One of the most innovative early TV shows was Captain Video and His Video Rangers, which aired from 1949-1955. The tales of this futuristic "Guardian of the Safety of the World," starring first Richard Coogan and then Al Hodge (the radio voice of the Green Hornet, who is shown atop TV Guide page, above), beat out rival Space Patrol and Tom Corbett—Space Cadet, despite a prop budget of only \$25.00 per week.

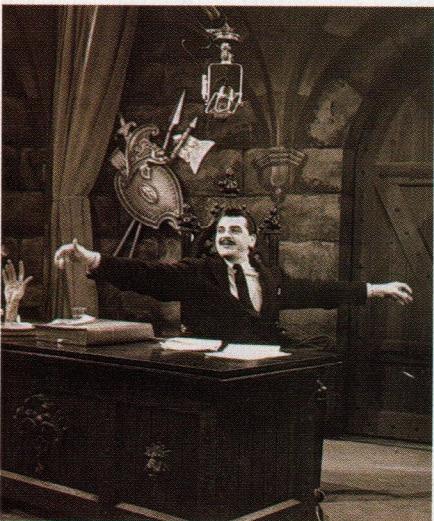




BETTMANN ARCHIVE

for the most part, nothing to look at but a blank screen and the hardwood cabinet that housed it. But, bit by bit, makeshift studios in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles sporadically transmitted cartoons, comic monologues, and pantomimes. By the decade's end, the new medium was attracting attention with a variety of offerings that included scenes from the Broadway play *Susan and God*; a test-pattern image of Felix the Cat; composer George Gershwin rendering "Lola"; a Princeton-Columbia University baseball game; on-the-spot coverage of a man poised on a Manhattan hotel ledge, preparing to leap to his death; and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's opening of the 1939 World's Fair in New York.

World War II brought television's forward march to a virtual halt, although the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) did produce *The War As It Happens*, a weekly program that began in February 1944. Transmission lines were taken over for war needs, and critical



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Ed Sullivan's variety show (top) kept people tuning in on Sunday nights for 23 years. Ernie Kovacs (center) never had a big hit show, but his visual brand of comedy greatly influenced future TV comedians, including today's David Letterman. Sid Caesar's *Your Show of Shows* (below), which only ran for four years (1950-1954), is remembered as one of television's all-time best.

materials were diverted from the burgeoning television industry to production of radar components and bombsights. Americans simply added television to their list of dreams put on hold for the postwar world.

It did not take long, however, for television to find its place after the war ended. Thousands of men who had braved combat now strove to meet mortgage payments. For the first time in several generations, the number of Americans owning their own homes surpassed the number who rented. And, as the little house on the quiet street in the suburbs became reality for growing numbers of Americans, television sets began to assume their place as the home's centerpiece.

In the entertainment industry, television also took center-stage, leaving radio, motion pictures, sports, and even publishing scrambling in the wings. As of 1946, scattered stations around the country were telecasting programs. Within two years, four networks—the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), the American Broadcasting Company (ABC), and Dumont, in addition to NBC—were on the air for much of each day and evening. By 1950, the new medium had become the unmatched leader of show business. As such, it was to have a profound effect on the American scene.

Antennas by the tens of thousands sprouted from rooftops. The first family on the block to own a television set soon



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found itself beset by uninvited guests who stopped by to glimpse the wonder-box "just for a minute." One woman recalled: "We didn't like our cousins, but they had a television set. A few times a week we'd go to their house and watch television. It didn't matter what. Everything was a treat. Even so, there'd be bickering. Our family got our own set—and that worked out for the better, all the way around."

During the first decade or so of network television—from 1946 through 1955—the new medium underwent vast expansion and wild experimentation. Centered in New York—and initially resented and reviled by Hollywood—television looked to radio, theater, and vaudeville for writers, directors, and performers. Television studios, bulging with microphone-booms, scenery, and cameras, overflowed into theaters,

dance studios, and old movie houses.

Live drama became the distinguishing signature of television's golden years. Producers, for a time denied Hollywood stars and properties, brought both original dramas and adaptations of classics to America's television screens. A listing of some of the era's "anthology series" forms an honor roll of an under-appreciated portion of American letters and dramatic history: *Philco Playhouse*, *Armstrong Theater*, *Lux Video Theatre*, *Robert Montgomery Presents*, *Schlitz Playhouse of Stars*, and *Goodyear TV Playhouse*.

Millions of viewers who had never been to a stage performance suddenly had top-flight, theatrical-quality presentations right in their living rooms. *Studio One* presented "The Twelve Angry Men"; *The U.S. Steel Hour* offered "No Time for Sergeants"; *Philco Television Playhouse* brought forth "A Trip to Bountiful." Ris-

ing stars from New York's theater world, such as Paul Newman, Kim Stanley, James Dean, Eva Marie Saint, Jack Lemmon, and Grace Kelly, found important roles.

In 1953, Paddy Chayefsky's poignant *Marty* crowned the era's original drama achievements. His tale of the not-so-handsome Bronx butcher and his pals, with its true-to-life settings and realistic street-talk, made a telling impact on the audience. Rod Steiger, who starred in this production, commented afterwards: "People from all over the country and all

different walks of life, people of different races and creeds, sent me letters. The immense power of that medium!"

Live telecasts of established works—*The Petrified Forest*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*—introduced those classics to whole new audiences. When, for example, television presented *Hamlet* in 1953, more people watched it at home in a single evening than had seen it on the stage in the 350 years since William Shakespeare put pen to paper.

For viewers seeking lighter fare, variety shows proliferated. Red Skelton introduced Clem Kadiddlehopper. Bud Abbot and Lou Costello asked "Who's on First?" Arthur Godfrey strummed his ukulele and gave a start to up-and-coming performers on his *Talent Scouts*. Kate Smith sang "When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain." Jerry Lewis played "Lady of Spain" on a set of bedsprings

under the watchful gaze of his partner, Dean Martin.

Ed Sullivan couldn't sing, dance, or tell jokes. And sometimes he forgot the names of the acts he was set to introduce. But as host of *The Toast of the Town*, the newspaper-columnist-turned-television-host proved the perfect foil for performers who *did* have talent. The "Great Stone Face" presided over a dazzling array of acts that ranged from classical pianists to ice-cube jugglers, from Shakespearean actors to barking seals, and from the Bolshoi Ballet to dancing dogs.

Sullivan's program went on the air in June 1948, just two weeks after Milton Berle made his raucous television debut. Before his show ended in 1971, impresario Sullivan presented some twenty thousand acts on his "really big shew."

For the manic-at-heart, Saturday evenings presented *Your Show of Shows*,



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CULVER PICTURES, INC.



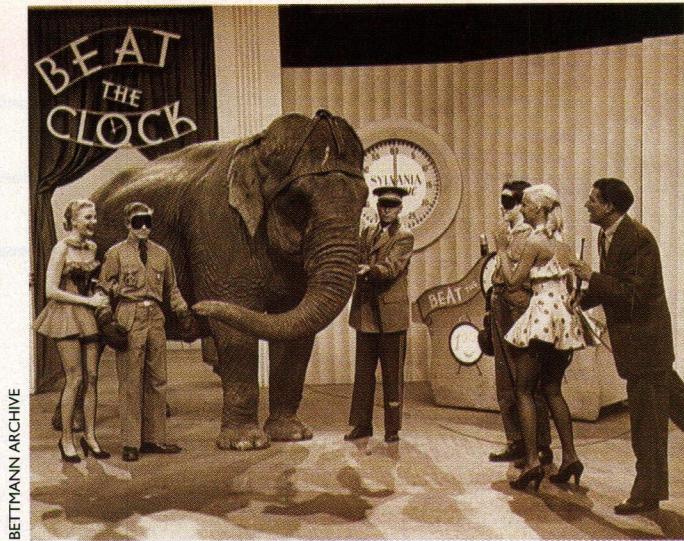
MUSEUM OF BROADCAST COMMUNICATIONS



BETTMANN ARCHIVE



UPI/BETTMANN



ninety minutes of inspired lunacy built around the dynamic comedy of Sid Caesar and cohort Imogene Coca. As caveman, dandy, or mad professor, Caesar would twitch, snarl, yell, and explode his way through sketches, often taking scripts by such stellar talent as Mel Brooks, Neil Simon, and Woody Allen beyond their written limits into hysterical new dimensions.

Situation comedies fast became prime television fare. At first, plain-and-simple homeliness set the tone—as in *The Goldbergs* and *Mama*—with quiet insights into everyday family matters. And there would be more than a touch of the wholesome to be savored in *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*, *Father Knows Best*, and *Make Room for Daddy*.

But “sitcoms,” as they came to be termed, afforded ample room for caricature. In *The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show*, Gracie was the delightfully

daffy one, George the resigned onlooker. Typically, George, with his ever-present cigar, would deadpan something like: “Gracie believes everything she reads. She fried fish the other day, and I had to buy her a new dress. The recipe said, ‘Roll in cracker crumbs.’”

Zaniest of the zany, *I Love Lucy* was to prove a resounding favorite. Viewers, it seemed, could not get enough of this spoof of married life—particularly of Lucille Ball’s indefatigable mugging. Week after week, her Lucy sought to reach out from the realm of domesticity toward a fuller measure of independence, with hilarious—sometimes disastrous—results.

During the episode aired January 19, 1953, Lucy gave birth to “Little Ricky Ricardo”; on that same day, real-life Lucille gave birth to Desi Arnaz, Junior. More television viewers watched the arrival of the fictitious Ricky than would tune in

Early game shows included the questionable *Strike It Rich* (above, top left), with Warren Hull, whose contestants were in need of charity for themselves or others they represented; *Beat the Clock* (above, top right), with Bud Collyer, on which guests were asked to do stunts, often while blindfolded, in less than a minute; *Quiz Kids* (above, bottom right), which featured bright youngsters who answered difficult questions; and *Break the Bank* (above, bottom left), starring Bert Parks of *Miss America* fame, where prizes could run as much as \$10,000.00.

for President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s inauguration the next day. The nation did indeed love Lucy, through 179 episodes that ran from 1951 to 1957.

Crime-solving also became a television staple. *Man Against Crime*, featuring Ralph Bellamy as a special investigator

continued on page 34

MR. TELEVISION:

AS THE CLOCK neared 8:00 P.M. eastern standard time each Tuesday during the late 1940s, a strange phenomenon gripped cities and towns across the United States. Business fell off in nightclubs. Movie theaters sold few tickets. Shopkeepers closed for the evening. Diners in restaurants asked for their checks and left.

For the next sixty minutes, members of eight out of ten families who owned television sets sat, sides aching with laughter, with their eyes glued to their small, black-and-white screens. The center of all this attention was the mercurial Milton Berle, a jack-of-all-laughs vaudeville/nightclub/theater/radio comic who held America's biggest spotlight. Starring in *The Texaco Star Theater*, which debuted on June 8, 1948, he quickly became the undisputed, number-one performer in U.S. television. In a remarkably short time, the master gagster had turned television from an exotic toy into the nation's must-see medium.

The Texaco Star Theater was part circus, part football game, part shambles. The star told jokes, sang, told jokes, mugged, told jokes, danced, told jokes, strutted—and told jokes. His shows featured brash, loud comedy; outlandish costumes; and first-rate guests such as Basil Rathbone, Pearl Bailey, and Walter

Houston, who did their best to cope with their host's slapstick, one-liners, and all-around upstaging.

Berle's stocks-in-trade were the yock, the blacked-out teeth, the fright-wig, the lisp, the swagger, the falling pants; he was an extrovert running rampant. To top it all off, he had the *chutzpa* to keep smashing ahead even when jokes fell flat or scenery crumbled. One viewer said of the experience of watching Berle's antics: "I expected to see the living-room walls bend outward from our family's guffaws."

As Berle's popularity soared, so did the sale of television sets. When his show first aired, there were about five hundred thousand sets in American households; within two years, the number reached six million, and Berle became known as "Mr. Television." "Since I've been on television," he would crack, "they've sold a lot of sets. My uncle sold his, my next-door neighbor sold his"

Berle's weekly offering had to be thought up, sketched, scored, rehearsed, and presented to the audiences every seventh day for 39 weeks out of the year. It was a seemingly impossible schedule, but Berle, smoking a dozen cigars a day, did it. "I ran like a maniac all around the studio," he remembers, "directing, getting into dance routines, shifting

scenery, setting up shots for the cameramen, telling actors how to read their lines—I got into everything." He would turn up in four or five costumes a show—he became an acrobat, Sherlock Holmes, a prize-fighter, Carmen Miranda, an explorer, or whatever—and could switch from tuxedo to tutu in ninety seconds.

Called "The Thief of Badgags," Berle was said to have kept nine hundred thousand jokes (some of them his own) locked in an office safe and another thirty thousand stored in his mind. He hammered away like a machine gun: "Good evening, ladies and germs" . . . "Hey mister, would you mind moving? Your head's shining in my eyes." . . . "Madam, is that a hat, or am I looking at a side order of potato salad?" . . . "Bing Crosby may be forced to retire for financial reasons. His last check came back—insufficient banks!" As to why Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, appearing on another network, had such good ratings: "Hey, he's got better writers: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John!" . . . and so on through his repertoire.

"It was all live," Berle explains. "Whatever went wrong, stayed wrong. Once, doing an underwater-pen joke in a tank, I almost drowned. Three elephants left their calling cards on stage.



MILTON BERLE

Ooh-fah! Dressed as a bride, on one show I got caught in a curtain roll-up and wound up ad-libbing suspended in mid-air. There were bloopers, flubs, blank-outs. Sometimes, I would just turn to the camera and say: 'What's next?' Half the time I didn't know, either. People saw what they got—and got what they saw."

"I could do com-edie," Berle observes. "I could do low comedy. I could do high. Be hokey. Do a straight-line. Insults, sight-gags, malapropisms, juxtapositions, plays-on-words—those I could do. I ran the gamut."

It isn't surprising. By the time he headlined *The Texaco Star Theater*, at the age of forty, Berle had spent all but the first five years of his life in show business. Everything that he had learned along his rough-and-tumble way—as a child actor in silent films, a five-a-dayer in vaudeville, a night-club entertainer, a Broadway personality, a radio regular—he unleashed before the television camera to the delight of America.

Looking back at those Tuesday nights of glory, Milton Berle, still remarkably fit at 87 years of age, feels a sense of fulfillment. "When I hit, it was like an explosion. All of a sudden, it wasn't a theater I had laughing, but a nation. That's what performing is all about. And the bond holds. I'm 'Uncle Miltie' to those who saw me, and to their children and grandchildren."

He was, for the seven years of *The Texaco Star Theater*'s historic run, the one and only Mr. Television. And he wistfully thinks about his audiences and the way he felt about them: "Like the show's closing lyric says, 'There's just one place for me—near you.'" ★

BETTMANN ARCHIVE



This profile is based upon a recent interview granted by Milton Berle to Edward Oxford for American History magazine.

LIFE IN FRONT OF "THE TUBE"

For years before TV took hold in America, families gathered in the evening to listen to their favorite radio programs, so the switch to television would seem to be a natural evolution. But "the tube" was more seductive; it made you afraid that you would miss something if you didn't pay attention. It was no longer as easy to sew, play a game, or do homework while listening; you had to be able to watch too.

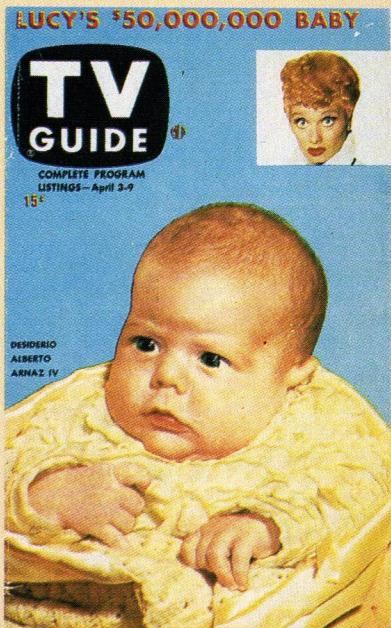


in 1954, starting with a turkey entrée in a tray that could be taken right in front of the television set.

By 1953, viewers could buy *TV Guide* to help them keep track of the increasing number of new programs. The premier issue hit the newsstands the week of April 3-9 that year with *I Love Lucy's* "Little Ricky" on the cover.

More and more companies aimed their advertisements at what would come to be called the "television generation." Ads for the latest models of television sets proliferated. Some sets, like the one mentioned in the 1949 ad shown here, could cost more than \$2,000; for many at the time, a year's salary.

Most sets, however, were more reasonably priced, and Americans were buying them—between 1949 and '55 the number of families with televisions in the U.S. increased more than 1,500 percent. In only a few years, television had become a source of information, a primary form of entertainment, a babysitter or companion, and an important sector of the national economy. ★



tor, and Martin Kane, *Private Eye* emerged as early successes in 1949. Writers were instructed that "somebody must be murdered, preferably early, with the threat of more violence to come."

Dragnet, the prototypical crime drama, began in early 1952. The widely popular show featured Jack Webb as Sergeant Joe Friday, badge No. 714 for the Los Angeles Police Department, ever in quest of "the facts, ma'am (or sir), just the facts." There were few fist fights, few bullets, few moments of violence of any kind.

Westerns, a genre that almost saturated television schedules by the late 1950s, enjoyed their first success when William Boyd brought his *Hopalong Cassidy* from the movie screen to the nation's TV sets in 1947. A year later, *The Lone Ranger*, the daring masked rider of the plains, made the switch from radio with his fiery horse, Silver, and his faithful Indian companion, Tonto. Gene Autry was one of the first western motion-picture stars to film a series especially for television. Roy Rogers, the "King of the Cowboys," co-starred with his wife, Dale Evans, and his horse, Trigger, in 101 episodes, each of which closed with the Sons of the Pioneers harmonizing "Happy Trails to You."

As the television medium gained acceptance, viewers came to expect coverage of important or interesting news stories. Live coverage of events as they transpired and broadcasts illustrated with still photography or film footage whet the nation's appetite for news. Catching the nightly news at suppertime or just before bedtime—with commentators such as Walter Cronkite, Chet Huntley, David Brinkley, and Douglas Edwards—quickly became part of most families' routines.

Meet the Press, which debuted in 1947, provided weekly press conferences with newsmakers from around the world. (Network television's longest-running program, it is still aired weekly.) Vice-presidential candidate Richard Nixon turned to television for his famous "Checkers" speech during the 1952 campaign. Senator Estes Kefauver's investigation of organized crime fascinated audiences; at one point, a camera focused on the hands of reputed mobster Frank Costello while he time and again invoked his right to remain

continued on page 68

THEY SURVIVED FROM WWII THROUGH DESERT STORM... BUT AT THESE PRICES, OUR LEGENDARY FLIGHT JACKETS COULD SOON BE HISTORY.

WEAR THE LEGENDARY STYLE OF A GENUINE LEATHER FLIGHT JACKET
HANDMADE BY AMERICAN CRAFTSMEN



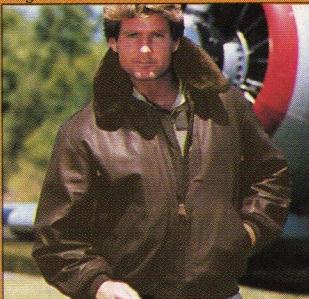
B. G-1 Navy Flight Jacket. Medium weight top grain leather. Our Price
Original 1944 pattern. Contoured pocket flaps. Under arm gussets and bi-swing back. Reg. retail price: \$295.

\$179.



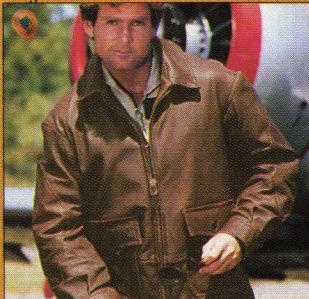
C. B-15 Flight Jacket. Premium, top grain leather. Smooth nylon satin lining with removable 3M Thinsulate lining. Detachable lamb fur collar with full leather under collar. Reg. Retail Price: \$350.

\$249.



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IN SEARCH OF SILVER & GOLD

BY DON CHAPUT ALTHOUGH KNOWN FOR HER CHARITY, NELLIE CASHMAN WAS A DEDICATED AND KNOWLEDGEABLE MINER WHO SEARCHED THE WEST FOR THE "BIG BONANZA."

GOLD RUSHES, STAMPEDES, and boom towns attracted hundreds of thousands of people—and hundreds of different personality types—to the American West. Many of these stampedes were gamblers, men of the green cloth; some were lawyers and officers of the law; and others were dreamers, teachers, speculators, clergymen, merchants, or women of easy virtue.

The Earp brothers rushed to Deadwood, Tombstone, Nome, and Goldfield. E. J. "Lucky" Baldwin, Tex Rickard, Dave Neagle, Rex Beach, Jack London, and "Arizona Charlie" Meadows were in the forefront of Western mining rushes. But these people and their ilk were pikers, short-timers, compared to the Irish immigrant named Nellie Cashman.

Equally at home in the Nevada desert, San Francisco, British Columbia, Baja California, the Klondike of the Canadian Yukon, and north of the Arctic Circle in Alaska, Nellie began her stampede days in 1872 and did not end them until she died 53 years later. Few who followed the lure of precious metals in the West could match Nellie's enthusiasm and optimism, and

no other earned such glowing praise from fellow prospectors and miners.

Nellie was born in Middleton, in Ireland's County Cork, to Patrick Cashman and Frances "Fanny" Cronin in 1845. When she was about five years old, Nellie, her younger sister Fanny, and their now-widowed mother arrived in the United States, refugees from Ireland's potato famine. After 13 or 14 years in Boston, the Cashmans headed west in the late 1860s, settling in the vibrant community of San Francisco, where Irishmen were numerous and influential.

In 1872, Nellie and her elderly mother traveled to the new silver-mining district of Pioche, Nevada, opening a boarding house about ten miles from the camp. At Pioche, they found a wild environment, with thousands of boisterous miners and millmen—most of them Irish—living in a situation where filth, gun fights, and altercations between owners and employees were commonplace. The throbbing life of this mining and milling center must have appealed to Nellie; in the coming decades, she would consistently move to similar communities.

There is no evidence that Nellie engaged in mining during her first experience at living near a mining camp. But during her two years at Pioche, she did become very involved in the affairs of the



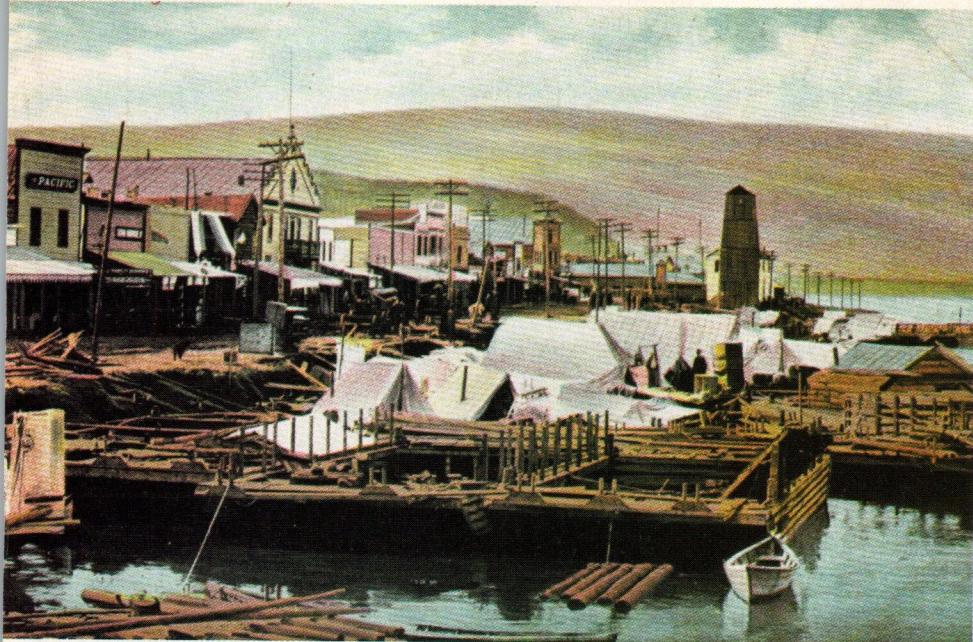
local Catholic church, participating in bazaars and other money-raising efforts.

When Nellie moved from Pioche, she left her mother with her sister Fanny and her family in San Francisco and traveled alone to northern British Columbia. There, for a few years in the mid-1870s, she operated a boarding house in the Cassiar District, on the Stikine River, not far from modern Juneau. She also worked gold-placer ground, becoming familiar with elementary mining geology.

In the winter of 1874-75, Nellie's reputation as an "angel of mercy," for which she is best known today, was born. While on a trip to Victoria, Nellie heard that a severe winter storm had ham-

For more than thirty years, the lure of silver and of gold nuggets such as the one shown above drew Nellie Cashman to the mining centers of the American and Canadian West. In 1905, she headed for the vicinity of Alaska's Koyukuk River, pictured here during spring breakup, and there spent the last twenty years of her life enjoying the adventure and challenge of living and mining above the Arctic Circle. Although her name is known to few Americans, her reputation as a miner and a philanthropist led the U.S. Postal Service to honor her with a stamp (left) in its 1994 "Legends of the West" series.





AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



ALASKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Nellie arrived in Dawson, Yukon Territory (above, left), in April 1898, two years after the discovery of gold there sparked what is known as the Klondike Gold Rush. To get there, Nellie and thousands of other prospectors, miners, and adventurers made the difficult trek up the Chilkoot Pass (bottom, left). As she had in other settlements, Nellie gave of her time and energy while in Dawson to raise money for worthy causes; St. Mary's hospital and church (bottom, right) improved dramatically in a just a few years, thanks in part to her efforts.

mered her fellow miners in the Cassiar diggings and that no one could get through. She immediately purchased supplies and sleds, hired six men, sailed to Fort Wrangell, Alaska, and headed inland through heavy snows. Her success at reaching the miners with the needed medicines and food became the talk of the West, as hundreds of miners considered her their savior.

The *Victoria Daily British Colonist* of February 5, 1875, in describing the rescue attempt, compared it to other efforts by famous prospectors and woodsmen, and declared that "Her extraordinary freak of attempting to reach the diggings in mid-winter and in the face of dangers and obstacles which appalled even the stout-hearted Fannin and thrice drove him back to Wrangell for shelter is attributed by her friends to insanity." If Nellie had done nothing else for the rest of her career, that incident alone would have guaranteed her place in mining lore and tradition.

In 1879, Nellie headed south and opened a restaurant in the new railroad center of Tucson, Arizona Territory. Within a year, however, she moved on to a new silver camp at Tombstone. Although she is linked to the legendary Arizona town from 1880 to 1887, Nellie left for brief periods to prospect and mine or run hotels in Baja California; New Mexico; and several mining areas within Arizona.

Nellie's career in Tombstone is the most familiar phase of her life; she was one of the fabled town's leading personalities during its glory years of 1880 to 1883. However, because she was in and out of town many times, owned or managed six different enterprises, worked many gold and silver claims, and bought and sold claims regularly, Nellie's financial success during her years in Tomb-

stone is difficult to gauge.

Nellie's charitable activities there, however, are easier to assess. She helped to establish the town's first hospital and its first Roman Catholic church. And, following the 1881 death of her brother-in-law, Tom Cunningham, she took care of her sister Fanny and their five children. When Fanny herself died of tuberculosis three years later, Nellie became the sole spiritual and financial support of her nieces and nephews.

In 1883, when news of a gold strike in Baja California spread over the West, Nellie organized a prospecting expedition that consisted of Milt Joyce, owner of the Oriental Saloon; Mark Smith, an active young lawyer who would later become a U.S. Senator; and 19 other hopefuls. They took a train south to the Sonoran port of Guaymas in Mexico, sailed across the Gulf of California, then tracked inland to the deserts of Baja California, around Mission Santa Gertrudis.

But this was a "gold rush" that should never have occurred. The finds were pitifully small, and the Cashman party, like all the others lured by the prospect of riches, failed to find gold. Instead, they were almost killed by the extreme heat and the lack of water before giving up and returning to Arizona. What was noteworthy about this expedition was the willingness of the 21 Tombstoners—all frontier veterans—to put themselves under Nellie's leadership.

In 1884, five convicted hold-up men, two of whom were Irish, were scheduled



AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

Sunset, a California publication, interviewed and photographed Nellie (above) in 1921 during one of her trips to the "outside." The still-feisty, 76-year-old miner told the writer of the article that, while she loved Alaska, she was not tied to it and might, "if anything turns up somewhere else, . . . pull up stakes and start out."

to be hanged in Tombstone. Nellie believed the authorities were making the executions too much of a public spectacle. According to popular accounts, she coerced a group of miners into tearing down bleachers intended for the many "ticket holders" expected to be on hand for the necktie party. The miscreants were hanged on schedule, but with a little less hoopla than had been anticipated.

Late in the summer of that same year, miners involved in a bitter labor dispute reportedly tried to lynch E.B. Gage, superintendent of the Grand Central Mining Company. Legend has it that Nellie, seeking to head off violence, took a buggy to Gage's home and spirited him away. Nellie's alleged role in this incident has become part of Tombstone lore despite evidence that Gage was out of town and that the man involved in keeping the lid on things was Charles Leach, the Grand Central foreman.

This and other misinformation about Nellie came in large degree from her nephew, Mike Cunningham, who became a prominent banker in Cochise County and who was a great admirer of "Aunt Nellie." Other unsubstantiated "facts" can be traced to John Clum, the ex-mayor of Tombstone who wrote an account of Nellie in 1931 for the *Arizona Historical Review*. It was Clum's account that gave cohesive form to the notion of Nellie as "The Miner's Angel."

Unfortunately, much of what Clum wrote was hearsay or exaggeration. He left town in 1882 and knew practically nothing first-hand of the events about which he later wrote. When Clum saw Nellie in Dawson some years later, she was again soliciting funds for the church. This second encounter reinforced his image of her as a philanthropist.

In 1888-89, Nellie was in the gold camp at Harqua Hala, in western Arizona, near the California line. She supplied the new camp with groceries and



equipment, purchased mainly in Phoenix, and may have operated a boarding house there for a month or two. Mostly, though, she was mining. She owned one of the better Harqua Hala claims, thoroughly prospected the region, and almost married Mike Sullivan, one of the original discoverers.

During this period, the Phoenix and Tucson newspapers published hundreds of articles about the Harqua Hala rush, some of them quite detailed. The best by far was written by Nellie for Tucson's *Arizona Daily Star*. In the piece, which appeared in the March 6, 1889 edition, she discussed the history of the camp, its problems, current progress, and future. She also commented on geological details, mining methods, richness of ore, assays, surface equipment, types of claims, and leading personalities in the field.

During the next several years, Nellie tried her luck at mining camps in Sonora, Mexico; Globe, Jerome, Prescott, and Yuma, Arizona; and several points in Montana. It was while she was in Yuma in 1897, operating the Hotel Cashman, that Nellie heard of the gold strike in the Klondike. She closed shop, arranged some financial backing, and headed north, making the difficult trek over the Chilkoot Pass to Dawson.

By the time she arrived in the Klondike

in 1898, Nellie had worked gold in British Columbia and Arizona, and had owned and worked silver mines in Arizona and New Mexico. In the Klondike, she worked her claims and, for a constant source of funds, operated restaurants.

For much of the time in the Yukon, Nellie had an assistant—her nephew, Tom Cunningham. Together they cooked, served meals, and did the dishes, then prospected and worked claims; when they had the time, they counted their net worth. Nellie made and lost a considerable amount of money in the Yukon. When a major strike paid off, she would invest in further claims and, as she had done everywhere else, she contributed money to the local church and hospital.

By this time, Nellie was a major donor to the Sisters of St. Ann, having given money to their first hospital in Victoria, British Columbia, back in 1875. In Dawson, her social life pretty much consisted of visiting with the Sisters or with the local and visiting priests. Although her business contacts were drunks, gamblers, miners, prostitutes, confidence men, and the hangers-on in one of the world's liveliest mining communities, she was able to maintain her dignity and self-respect.

Generous though she was, Nellie had a harder edge that often was at odds with the popular depiction of her as an angel

of mercy raising a cup of soup to a poor miner's lips. The reality was that Nellie was a miner, willing and able to push interlopers away from her claims. Feisty, aggressive, and proud, she became entangled in several major law suits while in the Yukon. In pursuing these cases, she did not hesitate to use all the weapons available to her, even deliberately stretching the truth from time to time or acting on rumor or information known to be false. She won some of the disputes and lost the others, but everyone knew that Nellie was no pushover.

By 1904, mining in Dawson had peaked. Nellie began to hear of excitement on the Chena and Tanana rivers—the site of modern Fairbanks, Alaska. Moving there in late 1904, she opened a combination store and mining-supply center. And once again, she raised money for the local hospital.

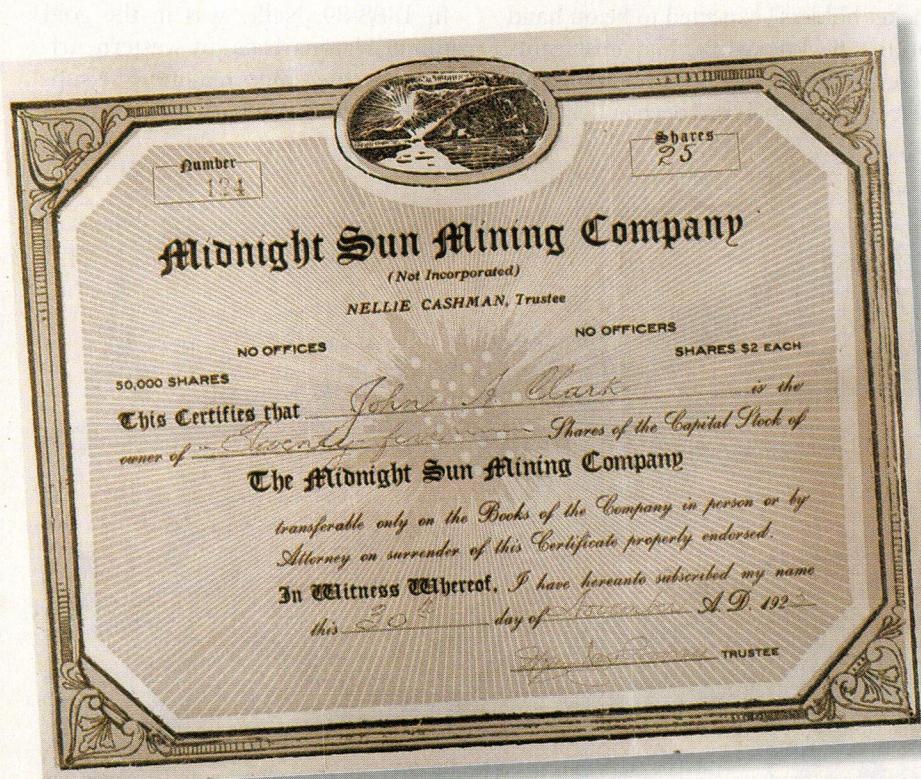
Nellie did very well in Fairbanks, until she heard her last call. In the distant north, hundreds of miles away, on the Koyukuk River basin of Alaska, north of the Arctic Circle, prospectors were bringing in great specimens, and there was wild talk of a huge strike.

She first went to the Koyukuk country in 1905, prospecting along Nolan and Wiseman Creeks. One of the first to file claims there, Nellie would eventually file more than twenty during the next two decades. She seriously worked at least six of the sites and was making plans to bring in larger, more effective equipment when she died early in 1925.

Truly at home in Koyukuk country, Nellie spent most of the last twenty years of her life on Nolan Creek, then the farthest north of any mining camp in the world. She and the from one- to two-hundred others there were really on the edge of the world in a harsh climate, with no amenities, forgotten by just about everybody.

Some have called the residents of the
continued on page 70

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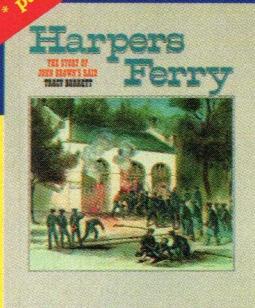


In 1922, in order to raise funds to work her Nolan Creek claims in Alaska with hydraulic machinery, Nellie formed the Midnight Sun Mining Company, with herself as the sole trustee. The certificate shown here may be the only surviving copy of Midnight Sun stock, and its number—124—seems to indicate that Nellie did entice some investors to buy shares.

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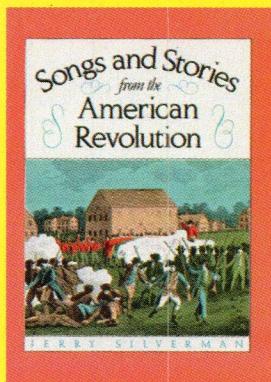
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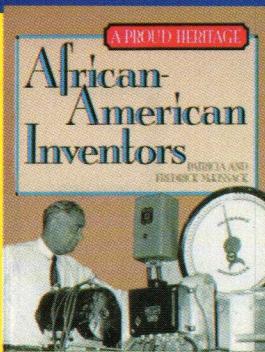
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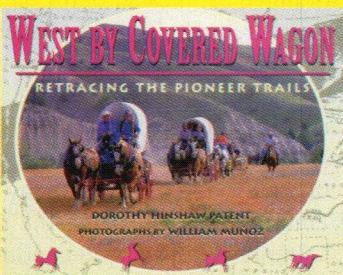
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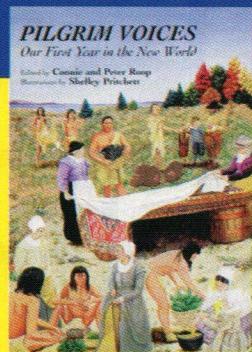
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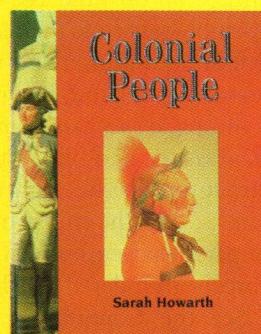
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PEACE JUBILEE

WHEN PRESIDENT Ulysses S. Grant, in office only three months, entered the crowded coliseum in Boston on June 16, 1869, "the vast assembly started to their feet as if by one common impulse, and while the hero stood, hat in hand, bowing to the mighty throng, *a cheer went up from sixty thousand voices*, and filled the far-extended structure, like the mighty roar of the ocean. . . . In the midst of this scene of unparalleled enthusiasm, the powerful organ thundered forth the strains of 'See the Conquering Hero Comes,' and then . . . ten thousand souls in colossal chorus, gave voice to the words of that welcoming anthem."

Grant, who had brought the four-year-long Civil War to a successful conclusion in 1865, had campaigned for the presidency with the slogan "Let us have peace!" Now he stood, a symbol of the return of peace to the land, receiving this tumultuous ovation at a gigantic music festival dedicated to drawing the country—North and South—together. Although scars of the bitter conflict remained, the United States was finally ready to stage "a demonstration which, in magnitude and splendor, would represent the greatest cause for national rejoicing which the American people were ever called upon to celebrate"

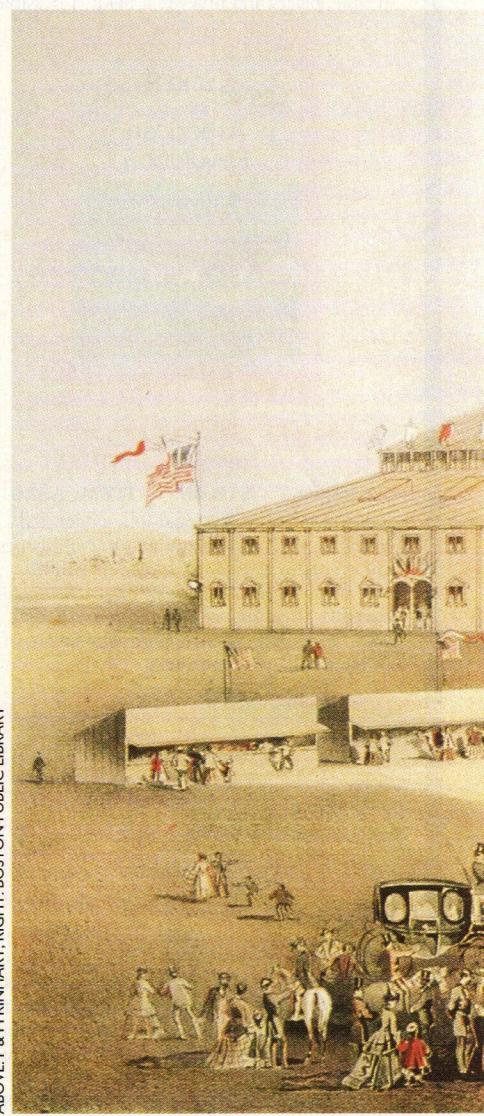
Americans were tired of war and its aftermath. They looked forward to a new

day and something that would draw all regions of the country together. The answer to that longing in the form of a giant music festival dedicated to peace was the brainchild of Patrick S. Gilmore, a well-known bandleader of the day.

Born in Ireland, Gilmore settled in America about 1850 and met with great success in Salem, Massachusetts, as a leader of a military band. Moving to Boston, he served as both a performer and conductor, and managed many musical entertainments. During the Civil War, Gilmore organized and conducted a "monster concert" in New Orleans at the inauguration of Governor Henry W. Allen of Louisiana in 1864.

The idea for a national jubilee to commemorate the restoration of peace came to Gilmore in June 1867 while he was passing a few days in New York City. He envisioned the grandest musical festival

The idea of a gigantic concert to celebrate the return of peace to the nation following the Civil War originated with Patrick S. Gilmore (top, right), a popular bandleader of the day. Gilmore's vision grew to be an obsession, and beginning on June 15, 1869, Boston hosted a musical extravaganza the likes of which the U.S. had never seen. Thousands made their way to the specially-built coliseum (bottom, right), where a festive atmosphere prevailed outside as well as within the building.



ABOVE: F. & M. RINHART; RIGHT: BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

BY FLOYD RINHART & MARION RINHART A MONSTER MUSIC FESTIVAL IN BOSTON IN 1869 CELEBRATED THE RETURN OF PEACE TO THE WAR-WEARY U.S.

the world had ever known, held in a vast structure that could accommodate a chorus and orchestra of ten thousand voices and instruments.

At first, when he expressed his ideas to those close to him, he met with incredulity. Soon, despite this negative reaction, Gilmore's vision became an obsession.

During his years as a bandleader, Gilmore had made the acquaintance of many influential citizens in New York and Boston whose advice was always open and never withheld. He first presented his ideas to friends in New York,

but they let the opportunity to have that city host the event slip by—the concept of one thousand musicians, ten thousand mixed voices in an oratorio chorus, twenty thousand children performing national airs, a building capable of holding fifty thousand people, and an overall budget of about \$200,000 was too mind-boggling. When one close friend opined that it would "take an emperor" to carry out his scheme, Gilmore replied, "Then, I must become an emperor."

Although his idea fared little better in Boston at first, Gilmore persevered until

he won the support of the city's prestigious businessmen and musicians of standing. He outlined his plans in a prospectus for the Boston newspapers and soon \$1,000 subscriptions began coming in from prominent individuals and businesses—M. M. Ballou, proprietor of the St. James Hotel; Oliver Ditson, a leading music publisher; the celebrated organ manufacturing firm of Mason and Hamlin; Chickering and Sons, the famous piano-forte makers; and, of great importance to the success of the venture, Eben D. Jordan, of the dry



goods firm of Jordan Marsh & Company, who would later become the treasurer for the enterprise.

Despite this promising beginning, raising the necessary money was difficult. It seemed at times—many times—that the enemies of the project, such as the well-known music critic John S. Dwight, were just as powerful as those laboring toward the grand objective. Undaunted, Gilmore told his army of volunteers that his plan was to “treat every coming day as if it were a river, and use each \$1,000 subscription as a pontoon bridge to carry the public over . . . ‘Forward!’ is the word; so lay down your first bridge tomorrow, and the thing will be done.”

His plan worked well. Each day, through the press, the public was informed of every \$1,000 subscription. After eight or ten announcements, money began rolling in.

Boston was not alone in supporting the cause. Many musical societies from towns and cities across the country that would

participate in the jubilee sold \$100 subscription tickets that admitted three people to all concerts during the five-day festival. The entire profit from these sales, buyers were assured, would be “distributed among the cities and towns throughout the country for the relief of the distressed Widows and Orphans of those who fell in the Rebellion.”

Gilmore, meanwhile, worked at winning the hearts of Boston’s most prominent musicians. After hearing him outline his plans, Julius Eichberg, director of the Boston Conservatory of Music and head music teacher in the public schools, wrote to Gilmore that he “should be proud to assist you in the measure of my feeble talents and influence.” Eben Tourjée, director of the New England Conservatory of Music, agreed to organize the great chorus; soon after the announcement of his appointment, four thousand singers came forward in Boston alone to join his music classes. Some were harder to convince; the Handel and Haydn Society, although the very first invited, did not agree to join the great jubilee chorus until the eleventh hour, but then furnished 650 voices.

Even after the musical direction for the concerts was arranged, the decision on a venue for the festival remained unsettled. At first, the parade ground at Boston Common seemed the logical choice for

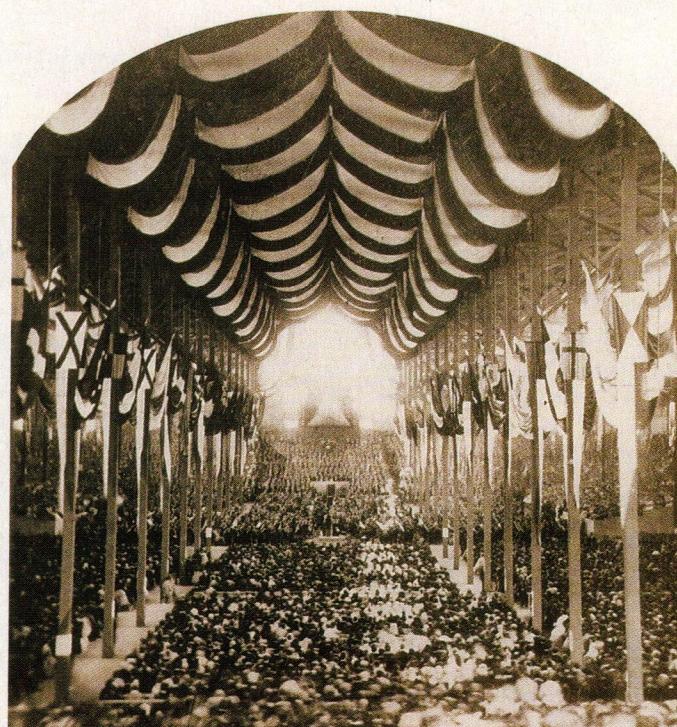
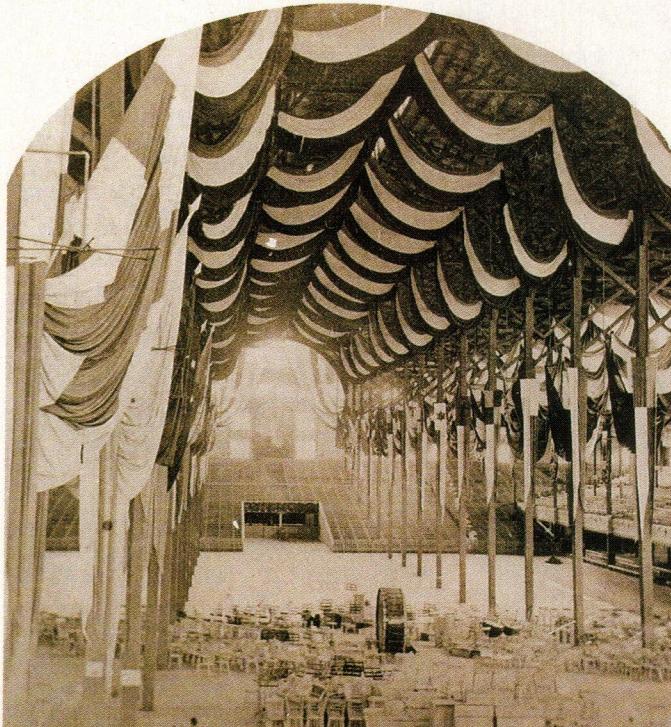
erecting the huge coliseum that would house the event. But, on the morning of March 24, 1868, building-committee members announced that they had chosen a site in the Back Bay section of the city, on land known as St. James Park. Convenient to the Albany and Providence Railroad’s line, the coliseum would be only a short carriage-ride from Boston’s major hotels and other attractions.

Soon, great wagons, lined up as far as the eye could see, began delivering more than 2.5 million feet of lumber. The building would be the largest ever erected on the continent. Measuring five-hundred feet long and three-hundred feet in width, it boasted a quarter-mile-long promenade and a gallery designed for the choir and musicians, and was capable of holding about fifty thousand people. In addition to its size, the coliseum was, according to one report, unrivaled “for strength, convenience of access, and general adaptation for its purpose . . .”

While construction continued, rehearsals took place day and night, with some one hundred choral organizations participating. Mr. Tourjée, *Harper’s Weekly* reported in May, had “found it necessary to issue a circular stating that no more choral organizations can be accepted, and that societies already accepted must make no more additions to their numbers.”

An orchestra of more than a thousand musicians had been selected from the

When virtually empty, the massive, colorfully decorated coliseum (below, left) seemed cavernous. But that sense of space disappeared once the thousands of musicians—including the master of the eight-foot-in-diameter bass drum visible in the left-hand photo—and vocalists took their places, and spectators numbering in the tens of thousands filled the seats.



best bands and musical societies in the country. More than four hundred were expected from New York City alone. Ole Bull, the famous violinist, had been persuaded to be the concertmaster.

Posters and advertisements for weeks promoted the "Great National Peace Jubilee," one never seen before on the North American continent! Invitations went out to dignitaries across the nation, including prominent leaders of the former Confederacy.

A "Bureau of Accommodations" was established to help supply rooms to shelter the huge influx of visitors. Gilmore even solicited help from the famous "Big Jim Fisk"—the King of Railroads, Prince of Steamboats, and Chief of Impresarios. Fisk magnanimously gave orders to the heads of departments to issue excursion tickets over all their railroad lines.

As the great day of June 15, 1869 approached, railroad stations and steamboat depots bustled with activity. In Boston, many citizens arose on the eventful morning, put appropriate badges in their buttonholes, and made their way to the new coliseum for the ten o'clock rehearsal. Travelers from other New England states and Canada poured into the city by rail and boat—many duly sporting their badges and carrying rolls of music for the "Grand Chorus."

The doors of the coliseum were thrown open to the public long before the concert's scheduled 3:00 P.M. start. Long lines formed all day at the ticket office (about \$46,000 was taken in one day).



F & M RINHART

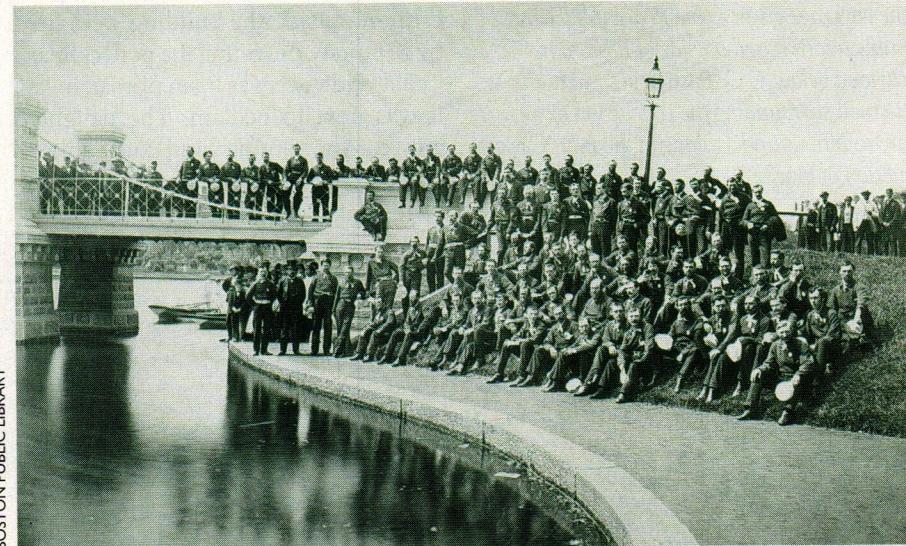
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For this occasion the band will be drawn from the great Project of the Coliseum, thereby
giving an opportunity for an interchange of contributions and friendly greetings,
and of bringing to a happy close the most important national conference
and the most important National Festival of the year.
Has ever adorned the pages of History?
The scale upon which it is proposed to carry this Festival will represent in its magnitude and
splendor the greatest cause for National rejoicing that the American people
have ever been called upon to celebrate.

THE RESTORATION OF PEACE AND UNION
THROUGHOUT THE LAND.
It will bring together in brotherly concord, leaders of all the nation, and people from all
parts of the land, and, aside from its significance as
The First Grand National Reunion
SINCE THE CLOSE OF THE WAR.
IT WILL BE THE GREATEST
Feast of Sublime and Inspiring Harmony
THAT HAS EVER BEEN HEARD IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD.

SUBSCRIPTION SEASON TICKET.
Admitting Three to all Concerts and other Entertainments throughout the
Festival.
ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS.
Fifteen Hundred Subscribers will receive this Season Ticket of admission.
Subscribers for Season Tickets will be admitted to all the shows of the Festival.
Subscriptions may be found at the Principal Hotel, and also in several prominent Mer-
cantile Houses, representing various branches of business in Boston.
No money to be collected until the necessary number of Subscribers are obtained and Committee on-
ficially organized, and the same will be done by the Subscription and Finance Committee.
Popular Prices (according to location of seat), for single admittance to each entertainment, will be
fixed as soon as a sufficient number of Season Tickets are subscribed for to guarantee the suc-
cess of the Festival.
The interior of the great Coliseum will be magnificently decorated, and will be arranged as a Par-
quet, Parquet Circle, Balcony, Domes Circle, and Promenade Gallery, and will contain seats
for 15,000 persons.
Information concerning Special National Arrangements and Full Particulars of all Ceremonies,
Entertainments, and Festivities, connected with this National Peace Festival, will be made
known in due time.

DISPOSITION OF THE PROFITS.
The entire profits arising from this National Peace Festival to be distributed among all the Cities
and Towns throughout the Country, in relief of the distressed Widows and Orphans
of those who fell in the service of their Country.
The amount given to each City or Town to be in proportion to the number of Season Tickets sub-
scribed by the people of — or in the name of — each place. Each Season Ticket will entitle
the City or Town to which it is given to an entire profit.
At the close of the Festival a full list of the names of Subscribers and of the Cities and Towns for
which they have subscribed, together with the amounts to be given to each City and Town, will
be published for the information of Subscribers and the Public.
**The Grandest Musical Demonstration that the World
has ever known.**

BOSTONIAN SOCIETY



BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

thousand musicians were in their seats, each with instrument in hand ready for the opening concert. The platform on which they sat inclined from the front to the rear, making every member of the orchestra visible throughout the building. The huge chorus was arranged to the right, left, and rear of the orchestra platform and ascended row upon row, until they reached the eaves—truly a magnificent spectacle!

The distinguished John H. Willcox sat ready to play the elegant organ, built by E. & G. Hook of Boston, whose sound could "sustain the vast chorus and orchestra, and fill the building with sound."

As the hour for the Jubilee arrived, the

Flyers (top, right) distributed across the country urged the purchase of advance subscriptions to the five-day festival; \$100.00 admitted three to all events and profits were to be distributed to the widows and orphans of Civil War soldiers. Among the concert's top attractions were Madame Parepa-Rosa (top, left), the "Queen of Song," who rendered Charles François Gounod's "Ave Maria" to the accompaniment of two hundred violins, and a stirring performance of the "Anvil Chorus" from Giesepp Verdi's *La Trovatore*, which featured a hundred, red-shirted firemen (bottom) who struck anvils with precision.

The audience was quiet with the wonder of the scene when a delegation of three walked down the broad aisle. After Reverend Edward Everett Hale offered an opening prayer and Mayor Nathaniel B. Shurtleff delivered a brief welcoming speech, Alexander Hamilton Rice, president of the National Peace Jubilee Association, gave a lengthy but eloquent address that advocated the restoration of peace to the Union.

Next, Gilmore stepped to the platform to "a perfect torrent of applause." He bowed to the vast audience and said a few words of appreciation and joy that the great musical spectacular could now, after months of difficult preparation, be presented.

The concert began with Martin Luther's grand choral, "God is a Castle and Defense." Next followed a triumph of music, with Richard Wagner's overture to *Tann-*

häuser "exciting and entrancing the senses and filling the soul with weird and peculiar pleasure" After a rendition of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's "Gloria," the famous "Queen of Song," Madame Parepa-Rosa, performed the "Ave Maria" by Charles François Gounod, accompanied by two hundred violins.

Of all the magnificent selections that comprised the first day's program, the most popular with the audience was Giuseppe Verdi's "Anvil Chorus" from *La Trovatore*. One-hundred red-shirted firemen positioned themselves, with their hammers, at the anvils that were arranged in rows running through the orchestra from front to rear. The music commenced, and the firemen performed their part like clockwork. Soon ten thousand voices poured out the familiar strain; the organ joined in, the brass band played the melody, three hundred violins swelled the music, and the great and small drums boomed in exact time. The effect was majestic. Then, at a signal, cannon outside the building were fired by electricity, providing the perfect finale.

The audience was in an uproar, in fact it was next to bedlam. The delighted crowd—the young and old alike—climbed up on the seats, waving hand-

kerchiefs and throwing up hats. Even the high-art critics joined in the uproar.

News reporters, also taken with the day's proceedings, wrote that the choral effect was grand and the enthusiasm of the enormous multitude inspiring.

Members of the press and the multitude eagerly awaited the arrival of President Grant on the festival's second day, said to have been the most interesting of the five-day event. Before 2:30 P.M., the doors were so jammed with people trying to enter that the doorkeepers and barriers could hardly hold them back. The final concert—"Children's Day"—featured thousands of "school children, their voices pouring forth a flood of sweet and simple song" The girls, wearing white dresses decorated with red and blue, appeared "charming in the extreme," and the children's renditions elicited "unbounded applause."

Throughout the week, attendance inside the coliseum increased, while curious crowds, unable to gain entrance, strolled about the grounds. A platform nearby provided a promenade, and policemen, placed every 15 feet, kept the crowd moving. A row of shanties and booths on the outer edge of the platform provided places

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A twinge of envy can be detected in some of the coverage given to the Peace Jubilee by publications based outside of Boston. In the cartoon below, C.G. Bush pokes fun at the turmoil surrounding the conclusion of such an ambitious undertaking in the July 3, 1869 edition of Harper's Weekly.



PEACE, LOVE, MUSIC

"It's a new dawn," Grace Slick, lead singer for the Jefferson Airplane, told a swelling crowd of 400,000 at Woodstock, the most famous music gathering in American history. Almost exactly one hundred years after Boston's Great National Peace Jubilee of 1869, the Woodstock Music and Arts Fair of August, 1969 proved to the world that nearly half a million American youths could live together, under conditions soon to be declared a disaster area, in love, harmony, and peace.

Like the Great National Peace Jubilee of 1869, the Woodstock Music and Arts Fair was a for-profit venture.* Michael Lang, who had produced the modestly successful Miami Pop Festival, wanted to build a recording studio in Woodstock, New York, where Bob Dylan and members of The Band lived. Believing that a studio in Dylan's hometown was sure to be a success, he enlisted the aid of a music industry friend, Artie Kornfeld, and the two put together a business proposal.

Lang and Kornfeld then approached two young, hip entrepreneurs, John Roberts and Joel Rosenman, who had placed a classified ad in *The Wall Street Journal* that read "Young Men With Unlimited Capital Looking For Interesting and Legitimate Business Ideas." As it turned out, Roberts and Rosenman had begun building Media Sound, soon to become a highly successful New York recording studio, and weren't particularly interested in the risky proposition of opening yet another studio, especially in a small town such as Woodstock.

They were, however, intrigued by one point in the business plan. Lang and Kornfeld had suggested creating a three-day music festival in Woodstock, with profits to go to their proposed recording studio. Roberts and Rosenman struck a deal with Lang and Kornfeld to form a partnership known as Woodstock Ventures Inc.,

UPI/BETTMANN NEWSPHOTOS



which would produce the music festival. Lang and Kornfeld could direct their profits to building the recording studio.

From the outset, Lang had an almost mystical vision of the Woodstock Festival. He felt strongly that there were magical properties to the Woodstock name and quickly trademarked it for his purposes. It soon became apparent, however, that no site for the concert could be found in Woodstock. Eventually, they settled upon one in Wallkill, New York, but Lang insisted on retaining the Woodstock name and logo—and the image of a dove of peace resting on a guitar neck, a symbol curiously similar to the one used for Boston's Great Peace Jubilee in 1869.

One month before the concert was to take place, authorities in Wallkill banned the festival. Fortunately, within days, Lang found what he felt was the perfect, magical site in White Lake, New York, on Max Yasgur's pastoral farm.

"Three Days of Peace and Music" and "An Aquarian Exposition" weren't just catchy advertising phrases dreamed up by Lang and his fellow producers for

For the more than 400,000 young people leaving Woodstock as the concert ended in August 1969 (above), the lack of food, water, toilet facilities, and shelter from the driving rain that turned the fields into a sea of mud had been little price to pay for being able to say that they had been present for one of the major "happenings" of the era.

Woodstock; in effect, they were safety measures. Lang and the other organizers were extremely concerned for the safety of the concert goers and worried that the rhetoric of violence from radical groups protesting the Vietnam war might incite a deadly riot. They crossed music groups and speakers advocating violence off the concert list, substituting pro-peace artists such as Joan Baez and Arlo Guthrie.

No one expected a turn-out of half a million people at Woodstock. New York State law-enforcement agencies were so skeptical of the crowd that was estimated that they didn't bother to plan for traffic tie-ups. The result was a horrendous traffic jam that closed down a por-

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*Profits from the Jubilee, however, were to be directed toward charity.

TEXAS CITY DISASTER

BY JOHN FERLING MORE THAN 500 PEOPLE DIED

IN THE AFTERMATH OF A DEADLY SHIPBOARD EXPLOSION THAT ROCKED THE TOWN OF TEXAS CITY, TEXAS, ON A QUIET APRIL MORNING IN 1947.

AS THE PEOPLE in Texas City, Texas, began their day that cool Wednesday morning of April 16, 1947, some complained about the nation-wide telephone strike, already eight days old, or expressed the hope that Secretary of State George Marshall, in Moscow for talks, might succeed in reducing tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. Most, however, were talking about the big news from Brooklyn, New York. The previous afternoon the Dodgers' Jackie Robinson had integrated major league baseball. His big-league debut was "quite uneventful," according to the *New York Times*; he had gone hitless in three at-bats.

It was, all in all, a pretty routine morning, when, at 8:00 A.M., eight stevedores at the Texas City docks removed the cover to the number four hatch on the French ship *Grandcamp* and descended into the hold to begin their day's work. They would be loading a cargo of fertilizer-grade ammonium nitrate (FGAN), completing a job that had begun the previous Friday.

The men sat and talked while they waited for the first tray of cargo to be lowered, but after only a couple of minutes, Julio Luna thought he smelled smoke. He called to his gang foreman on deck: "Hey, Boswell, are the Frenchmen burning any paper up there or anything?" "No," came the reply.

Luna and his colleagues began a search for a fire in the cargo. They found it quickly—"a small fire, very small," Luna later said, located about 15 feet down in the bags of fertilizer. Luna reported the fire to his foreman, who told him to extinguish it. One of the longshoremen found a half-filled jug of drinking water left behind by the previous day's crew and poured it on the tiny blaze. But the fire continued to burn. Luna then called for a gallon jug of water, which was poured on the flames, also to no effect.

By now thick black smoke—some said it was dark blue—had begun to rise out of the hold. For the first time the French sailors became aware of the fire. Julian Gueril, the ship's carpenter, who had walked past the number four hold several times in the past two hours without noticing anything unusual, was the first crewman to reach the blaze. He found two five-gallon fire extinguishers, and together with Guy Saucey, a seaman on the *Grandcamp*, he fought the stubborn fire. Less than 15 minutes had passed since the fire had been discovered, and the flames were already six feet tall and spreading. At approximately 8:20 A.M., the ship's whistle sounded an alert.

Additional crewmen hurried into the hold dragging the ship's fire hose, but it was never used. Some subsequently testified that the captain of the *Grandcamp*, Charles de Guillebon, forbade its use,

fearing that the cargo would be damaged. Others, however, contended that Pete Suderman, an official of the Suderman Stevedoring Company that most likely would have been liable for lost cargo, ordered that the water not be used.

The stevedores and crewmen were summoned topside. Jimmie Fagg, the longshoreman walking foreman, directed his men to seal the number four hatch. Captain de Guillebon activated the ship's steam smothering system in an attempt to suppress the blaze by denying it oxygen.

The only activity still going on below deck was in the adjacent five hold, where several boxes of small-arms ammunition were stored. Gueril, the busy ship's carpenter, and several other crewmen tried to remove the explosives, but made little headway. The crates were too heavy to be moved without a winch, and the smoke—which by now had turned a brilliant orange—had become too thick for the men to tolerate. Captain de Guillebon gave the order to abandon ship at about 8:30 A.M.

At that same moment, the fire whistle sounded at the Texas City Railway Company, owner of the docks. Three minutes later, Texas City's first whistle blew, summoning the members of the town's volunteer fire department with its four pieces of fire-fighting equipment. Although fire-fighting boats were requisitioned from



Galveston, only one tugboat set out on the 45-minute run to Texas City.

The fire had caused no panic. Although ammonium nitrate had long been used in the manufacture of explosives, no one recognized the danger that existed when this material burned. The Interstate Commerce Commission mandated that dangerous commodities must be identified with a red warning placket, but no such plackets had ever been stapled to the bags of FGAN shipped through Texas City. In fact, more than 75,000 tons of FGAN had been loaded there in recent months without incident; just the week before the *High Flyer* had taken on 961 tons of FGAN and was now berthed at Pier A to receive additional cargo. This fire, therefore, aroused concern for the safety of the ship, cargo, and docks, but those involved in bringing it under control felt no apprehension of additional danger. Everything, from

loading the *Grandcamp* to extinguishing its fire, was "presumed to be a normal operation," the vice president of the Terminal Railway Company later remarked.

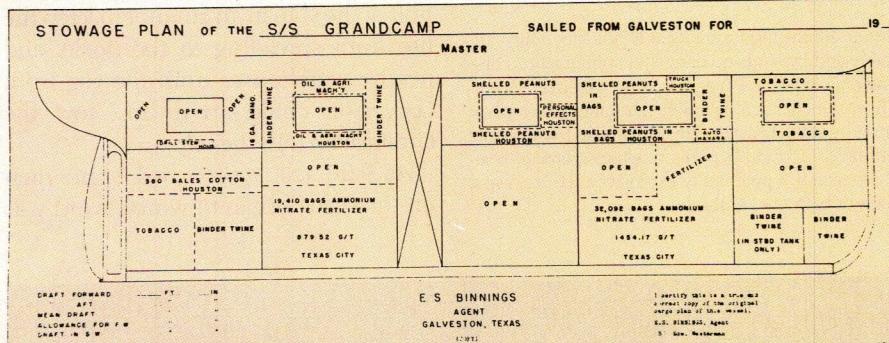
Texas City saw many ships come and go. Located on Galveston Bay about forty miles south of booming Houston, it was the eleventh largest port in the United States at the time. Although the first settler had arrived in the area in 1821, the town itself did not come into existence for another fifty years. It was called Shoal Point until the 1890s, when a consortium of Great Lakes shippers founded the Texas City Improvement Company. They purchased ten thousand acres on the bay, dredged the harbor to create a deep-water port, surveyed nearly 2,500 town lots, renamed the community, and waited for prosperity to arrive.

Boom times came slowly. By 1910, Texas City had only 1,500 residents, three

churches, and one bank. However, an oil refinery had opened, and the port did clear more than two hundred vessels each year.

Real growth came only with World War II. Soon after the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Monsanto Chemical Company opened a plant on Galveston Bay near the docks. By 1943 the plant was producing enough styrene, a component in synthetic rubber, to replace sixty million rubber trees. By V-J Day in August 1945, seven petrochemical companies, two oil pipeline firms, and the only tin smelter in the United States had located in Texas City. The population tripled during the war to approximately fifteen thousand.

Given the nearly 2,500 ships entering Texas City harbor each year by 1947, the *Grandcamp*'s arrival would hardly have been noticed. As the SS *Benjamin R. Curtis*, one of the thousands of Liberty ships built during World War II, she had been



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sold to France and renamed the *Grandcamp*, after the *Grandcamp les bains*, a spa in Normandy.

When the vessel recently docked at Pier O in Texas City, she already carried a very mixed cargo, including sixteen cases of munitions. In addition to its normal load of fuel oil, the *Grandcamp* routinely carried more than a hundred gallons each of gasoline, kerosene, and paint. By the time Julio Luna and his co-workers reported for work on April 16, the ship had already taken on 2,341 tons of FGAN, which had been loaded into the number two and four holds.

That the *Grandcamp* was taking aboard FGAN arose from decisions made far from Texas City. In 1946 residents in war-torn nations of Europe and Asia faced starvation. To alleviate the problem, President Harry Truman's administration opted to assist in the rapid restoration of farming operations so that these people could feed themselves. Fifteen surplus ordnance plants were reactivated for the manufacture of FGAN.

The fertilizer being loaded in Texas City that day arrived there by rail from three army-ordnance plants in the Midwest. It had been coated with carbowax

to prevent damage from moisture and packed in five-ply brown-paper bags, each of which held a hundred pounds.* The stevedores stacked the bags atop dunnage (one inch thick boards spaced two to three inches apart) that was covered with heavy paper, there to collect spillage if the bags should break.

The failure of this safeguard, however, probably caused the fire. Some bags ripped open, allowing some of the sandy-colored fertilizer to come into contact with the zinc-coated sheet-steel bilge pipes at the bottom of the hold. Contact with zinc, an extremely reactive catalyst for ammonium nitrate, can produce exothermal heating and eventually a fire. Subsequent tests conducted by the National Board of Fire Underwriters demonstrated that ammonium nitrate, when coated with wax and packed in paper bags, could ignite spontaneously at a relatively low temperature.

Once the hatches were opened on that

*Ammonium nitrate by itself is not inherently unstable and presents no danger of spontaneous combustion. It is, however, a strong oxidizing agent. Thus, the chemical reaction that takes place when ammonium nitrate is directly exposed with some carbon compound—in this case the carbowax-coating—creates a potentially explosive mixture, especially at high temperatures.

windy day (it was blowing at twelve miles per hour at 8:00 A.M.), the oxygen must have fed a smoldering fire and quickly turned it into a considerable blaze. A study commissioned by the Coast Guard concluded that such fires "are rapid, intense, impossible to manage if the burning surface is not exposed . . . and are, in general, dangerous, rapidly expanding fires." Tests also demonstrated that the *Grandcamp*'s steam smothering system only made the situation worse by heating the interior of the vessel.

Thus, by the time Texas City's volunteer firemen began arriving about 8:40 A.M., the fire on the *Grandcamp* was beyond control.

Chief Henry Baumgartner, a burly, good-natured purchasing agent for the Terminal Railway, drove the city's new fire truck to its first blaze that morning; 28 of his men responded as well. They poured tons of water on the deck of the hull of the ship in an attempt to keep the fire from spreading to the docks and nearby warehouses until the tug from Galveston could arrive and tow the *Grandcamp* into the bay.

As 9:00 A.M. approached, some men on the scene began to worry; word was



AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

spreading that the *Grandcamp* contained ammunition. Several dockworkers left. The vice president of Terminal Railway, W. H. Sandberg, also grew apprehensive. He telephoned a chemical engineer at Union Carbide and Carbon to ask if burning FGAN posed a danger. He was told that ammonium nitrate would explode only if a detonator were present.

Ben Lapham, the second mate on the *High Flyer*, became frightened when the rumor—unfounded, it turned out—spread through his ship that a vessel loaded with FGAN had exploded thirty days earlier in Genoa, Italy. Harvey Williams, a safety engineer for Pan American Oil, who was having coffee at Frank's Cafe near the docks, thought he smelled nitric acid coming from the fire, so he drove to his office to get gas masks for the firefighters. Something else worried longshoreman Jimmie Fagg; since the water being used by the firemen was pumped from Galveston Bay and contained a potpourri of waste materials discharged by the nearby Monsanto plant, he feared a chemical reaction that could result in an explosion. He moved farther away from the burning ship.

Others were less wary. Bewitched by the strange, beautiful orange smoke, dozens

of sightseers, including children, were drawn to the fire. Texas City had grown so rapidly during World War II that the schools operated in shifts; for many children the school day was still hours away.

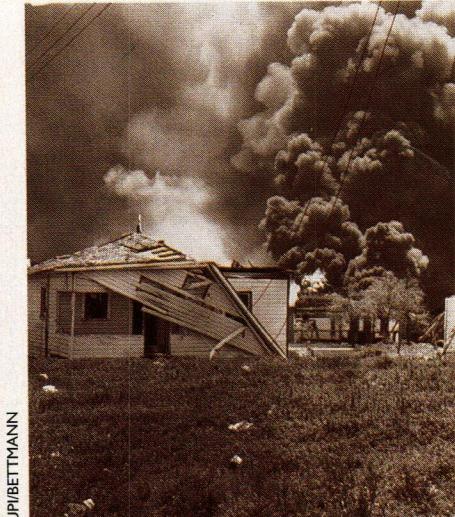
Bill Bell, a motorcycle patrolman, had been ordered to keep the road to the docks open. He chased away some spectators, but once all the town's fire trucks had reached the *Grandcamp*, he rode away on other business. The failure to remove spectators from potential danger was just one of numerous egregious blunders committed by civic and business officials that day. The town had strategies for dealing with the frequent hurricanes that hit the Gulf Coast, but neither civic authorities nor local industries had developed plans for an industrial disaster. The nearest fireboat was almost an hour away in Galveston, and the company that owned the docks did not have a tugboat on hand.

Moreover, Texas City had not been zoned for safety. Hazardous chemicals at Monsanto were permitted dangerously close to the docks; buffers were not required between the petrochemical plants; residential areas abutted the gates at Monsanto; and houses stood only a few hundred yards from the waterfront.

But, not all blame for what was about to occur rested in Texas City. By 1947 abundant evidence existed that ammonium nitrate could be very dangerous, yet no one had apprised the shipping lines or the stevedore company of the hazards they ran in handling this cargo. Few were aware that in 1920, the *Hallfried*, loaded with 2,100 tons of ammonium nitrate, had burned and exploded in Brooklyn, New York, or that a year later more than four thousand tons of this substance had exploded in Oppau, Germany, resulting in a heavy loss of life.

Thirty days before the *Grandcamp* caught fire, the Department of Agriculture published a circular reporting that fires and explosions had occurred during the manufacture of FGAN at four installations in New Jersey and Wisconsin. No one in Texas City was aware of this obscure publication.

At 9:12 A.M., the significance of these omissions became apparent when the *Grandcamp* erupted in an awesome explosion. Most observers, in fact, believed there were two explosions a few seconds apart. In all likelihood, the burning FGAN in the four hold exploded, that blast serving as a detonator for the fertil-



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Fearing new explosions, armed troops blocked roads (far left) to prevent anyone from entering Texas City's harbor area, which soon resembled a flaming torch (left). Homes and businesses near the waterfront (above) were flattened by the blast or consumed by fire.

UPI/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

izer in the two hold, as well as for the cargo of munitions and the ship's fuel.

In a blinding instant the waterfront and the adjacent industries became a hell on earth. Elizabeth Dalehite drove her husband, a ship pilot, to work that morning and was watching him walk toward the docks when the *Grandcamp* blew up. He simply vanished before her eyes. Almost everyone on the docks near the *Grandcamp* was killed, including 34 of the 41 crewmen of that ill-fated vessel.

The 27 firemen still on the scene died instantly. Only two who had responded to the alarm survived—Chief Baumgartner had sent home one man who had

worked the previous night, and another volunteer, an auto mechanic, helped unroll the hoses, then got permission to deliver a radiator to a shop in Galveston.

Two small planes circling 1,500 feet above the burning ship at the moment of the blast were blown from the sky. Pete Suderman, the stevedore company official, survived but lost a leg. Jimmie Fagg's fear of a chemical reaction and explosion likely saved his life. Although he had moved farther from the burning ship, he awakened under a pile of debris; next to him was the body of a man who had been decapitated.

Two ambulances parked near the *Grandcamp* were demolished and their drivers killed. Among the dock workers who perished were the four Hattenback brothers, all stevedores. Many spectators died. Leola Howell, standing with her husband about two hundred yards from the burning ship, was knocked down by the force of the explosion; when she got to her feet, she discovered that her husband was dead and one of her eyes was dangling from its socket. Hazel Wafford, a

first-grader who had been watching near the docks, was found a few minutes after the blast covered with oil and crying: "My daddy was on a boat working. He was thrown in the air. I saw him." A man who worked on the waterfront had been accompanied to work that morning by his six-year-old son who wanted to see the fire. The father survived; the child died. G.A. Trusty, a longshoreman, estimated that there had been four hundred people in the vicinity of *Grandcamp* before the blast. Thrown into the harbor by the explosion, he quickly swam ashore. When he looked about, everyone was gone. The "lack of people was ghostly," he thought.

The force of the explosion was astonishing. The *Grandcamp* was blown apart. A twenty-ton portion of the ship's deck landed nearly a half mile from the docks. An anchor was hurled even farther. A huge hydrochloric-acid barge berthed nearby, the *Longhorn II*, was pitched onto land, coming to rest atop a "No Parking Allowed" sign.

The damage caused by smaller objects was even greater, however. Thousands of

Rescue workers rushed to Texas City's waterfront to help carry out bodies of the dead and injured (below, top left), evacuate families who lost their homes (below, right), and dig amid the rubble for possible survivors (below, bottom left). Despite their good intentions, however, all that many could do was watch and wait until the fires had run their course (far right).



MOORE MEMORIAL LIBRARY, TEXAS CITY



UPI/BETTMANN



THE ROSENBERG LIBRARY, GALVESTON

red-hot steel rivets blew with tremendous velocity in every direction like shrapnel from an exploding bomb, piercing pipe lines at nearby Monsanto. Oil, gasoline, propane, ethyl benzene, and benzol burst from the ruptured lines and ignited. The blast also created a 15-foot-high tidal wave that surged through and beyond Monsanto, carrying the burning oil and chemicals, and starting new fires that resulted in still more explosions. Nearly 125 Monsanto employees, about one-quarter of those working that morning, died within seconds of the initial blast. Six of those who died at Monsanto had worked for the company less than a month, and two—David Felkner and Duwain Spivey—had started only that morning, 72 minutes before the explosion.

The *Grandcamp*'s cargo also became airborne with the explosion. George Peveto, who lived about twenty city-blocks from the docks, saw oil-well pipes weighing more than a ton flying over his house. Balls of twine were blown with such force that they, too, penetrated and ignited oil storage tanks.

An instant after the ship exploded, fires raged out of control in refineries and tank farms along much of the southern periphery of Texas City. Fires stretched from the harbor to Stone Oil and the Southport-Republic tanks about 3,500 feet west of the blast site. Twenty oil tanks were ablaze, in addition to the raging inferno along the waterfront. Flames leapt hundreds of feet into the sky, and thick, acrid, black smoke climbed even higher, blotting out the sun.

So considerable was the blast that it was recorded on a seismograph a thousand miles away in Denver, Colorado. Edgar Queeny, Monsanto's chairman of the board, later estimated that the impact of the explosion equaled that of 250 five-ton blockbuster bombs. He also believed that at ground level, the blast's force exceeded that generated by the atomic bomb exploded above Hiroshima, Japan, 18 months earlier. Felt 160 miles to the north, the explosion broke windows in Freeport, Texas, nearly 25 miles away.

The concussion of the blast knocked down buildings and mangled steel gird-

ers at Monsanto and along the docks. Pier A collapsed. Warehouses disappeared. One of Monsanto's smokestacks rumored to be the tallest structure west of the Mississippi River, tumbled down. The volunteer fireman who had started for Galveston only minutes before the explosion, returned to find that the houses nearest the harbor "looked like you had stepped on a bunch of match boxes."

Some residents perished in their dwellings. A woman who lived ten blocks away thought her five-room house had been lifted three feet off its foundation; she survived, but her house was destroyed and more than a hundred of her chickens died in the back yard from shrapnel and the concussion. Virtually every house within a half mile of the blast site was demolished. Another 539 houses left standing were subsequently condemned.

A two-story office building at Monsanto collapsed, killing or injuring all of its forty inhabitants. The plant superintendent, H. K. Eckert, seated at his desk when the explosion occurred, was knocked unconscious; he underwent brain surgery for the



removal of glass fragments. His secretary, standing about ten feet away, was crushed by falling debris. Robert Morris, Monsanto's assistant superintendent, was blown from his jeep and into a fire; however, the tidal wave that doomed so many others, swept him to safety. Lutz Frieler, manager of the Southwestern Sugar and Molasses Company, situated next to Monsanto, was in his small office building with nine employees. He was knocked unconscious. Awakened when the tidal wave washed over him, he remained trapped under rubble for nearly six hours, badly cut and suffering from a concussion and broken leg. Six others in his building perished.

Vernon Litton, blown from the top of the five-story polystyrene unit at Monsanto, survived. Fred Grissom, a young engineer who had recently graduated

from Texas A&M, was blinded by flying glass, yet carried a secretary with two broken legs to safety; then she guided him through the litter. Harley Bowen, a construction foreman, was blown into the water by the first blast and back onto the land by the second. He lost a leg.

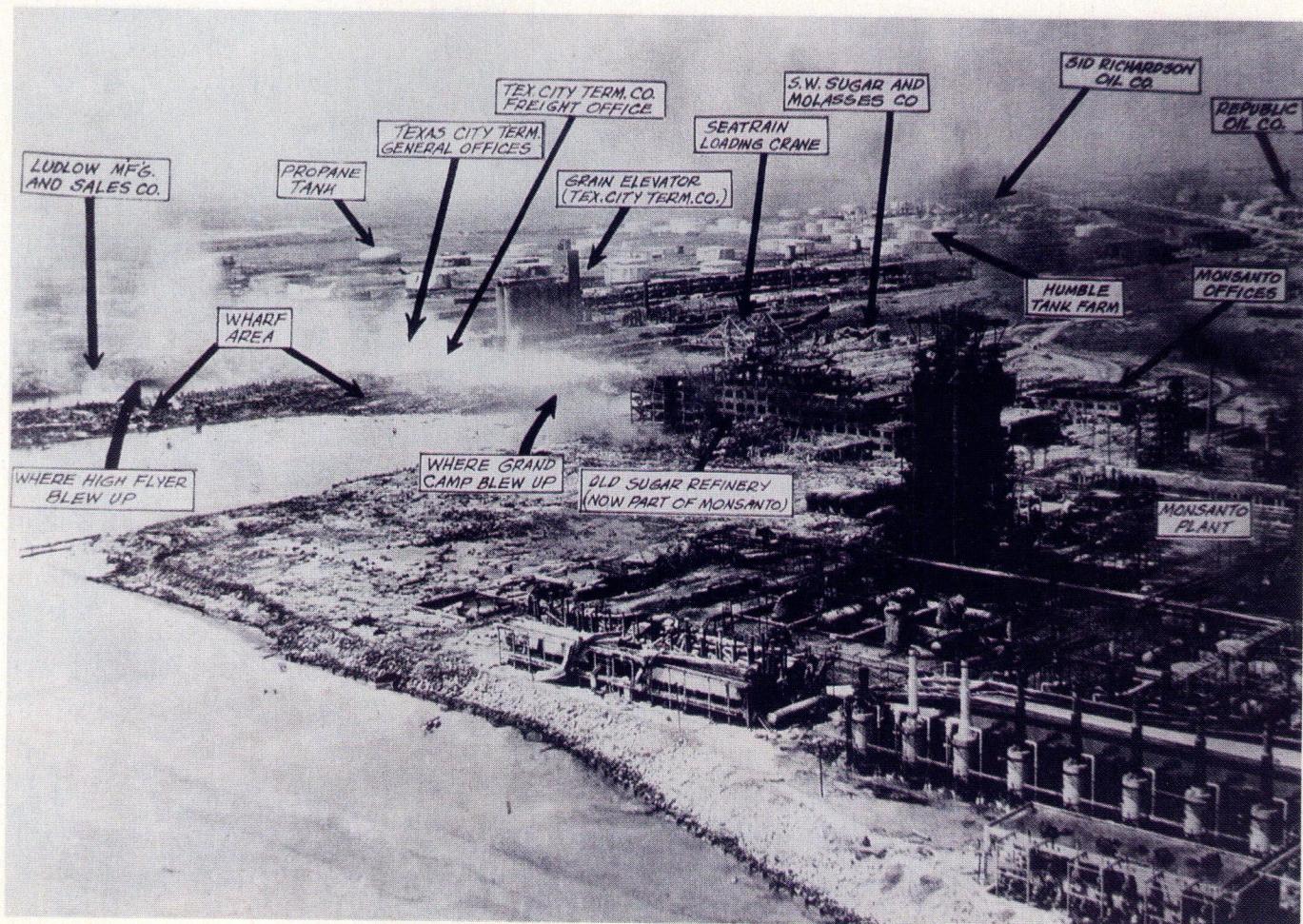
Many had no recollection of hearing the thunderous explosion, but almost everyone near the blast site remembered being knocked down by the concussion. A World War II amputee was thrown to the ground; his wooden leg was later found three hundred yards away sticking upright. Grant Wheaton, an executive at the Terminal Railway, recalled that "without any warning a terrific force struck me in my right eye and along the right side of my face"; the next thing he knew, he was "on my face on the floor, having been spun half around." Patrolman Bell, by then half a mile from the *Grandcamp*, was thrown from his motorcycle and knocked unconscious. When he awoke, he discovered that his cycle seat had been destroyed.

Some people remembered vehicles

bouncing like toys. A woman seated on a bus four miles from the blast recollects that "the detonation raised the bus, dropping it down, almost throwing it off the highway." Julio Luna, ecstatic at getting the day off, was driving home when the explosion lifted his car, spun it around, and "set one of the back wheels on the curb."

Other survivors recalled objects falling about them. John Davis, who was on the second floor of Monsanto's polystyrene unit, heard "a continued noise of the building falling, [of] water, oil, shell crashing in all around me." Fred Connally was in Monsanto's tool room when "a rain of soot and sand hissed and poured over me." Three of the *Grandcamp*'s crewmen were in a store purchasing sodas and cigarettes, when the roof collapsed on them. Peter Peterman watched as the plate glass windows in his jewelry store a mile from the docks "came toward me like a shower of rain." The owner of a local department store, Charles Lerman, saw the walls expand before the roof fell on him. Abraham Klotzman, who had

The tremendous scope of the damage that resulted from the explosions and fires is evident in this labeled aerial view of Texas City's devastated harbor area and the Monsanto Chemical Company plant.



"BOY, LOOK AT THAT"

I do not remember any day in 1947 before April 16. But that day is engraved on my memory, although I was only a seven-year-old second-grader at the time.

When Texas City's fire whistle sounded at 8:33 A.M., I was dressing for school. I hurried to the door to look for the fire and saw orange smoke rising to the south, toward the docks on Galveston Bay. Soon, Wayne Mire and Larry Clark, schoolmates and neighbors, arrived; it was my mother's turn to drive us to school. As we stood in the yard watching the smoke, Larry was especially excited; his father was a stevedore and might be near the fire.

We pleaded with my mother to drive to the fire, but she refused because we were running late. We spotted a neighbor, a volunteer fireman, looking for someone to give him a ride to the blaze. My mother thought momentarily about taking him along; but since she had several errands to run, she decided not to stop. Her decision probably saved both their lives.

At 9:00 A.M., class began, and for the next few minutes the burning ship was forgotten in the swirl of a new school day. Mrs. Katzmark, my teacher, assigned us a few pages to read, but at 9:12 A.M. I found myself staring out the window toward the school's empty playground.

My reverie was disrupted by a blast that seemed to suck the air from our classroom then force it violently back upon us. The outdoors seemed to turn very dark, and inside, all was chaos. Some classmates were on their feet. Some were crying. A stampede toward the door began. Even Mrs. Katzmark forgot the fire drill we had practiced so often. When it was discovered that the door was jammed and could not be opened, panic set in.

I noticed that the room was a shambles. Several desks were overturned, and the floor was littered with books, paper, and glass. Some of my classmates were bleeding. (I later learned that the glass from our room's tall windows had been hurled intact above our heads and shat-

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



tered against the opposite wall; some of the children seated against that wall suffered superficial cuts.) After what seemed an eternity, someone in the hallway forced open the door.

Once outside, I looked toward the south. All I could see was black smoke—a thick, moiling canopy of smoke that obscured the bright morning sun. An acrid smell permeated the air. I noticed strange objects sprinkled about the playground; they were pieces of steel from the ship that had exploded. One chunk, weighing hundreds of pounds, had landed where we played during recess each morning.

Ronnie Hale, a classmate, and I started home on foot. When we reached the town's main thoroughfare, the horror of what had occurred became more apparent. Glass from shattered shop windows crunched under foot with each step. Police cars, sirens blaring, streaked past. Some victims, in blood-soaked clothes, lay on the lawn in front of a small clinic; many screamed and cried. "Boy, look at that," Ronnie exclaimed, as a man walked past us toward the clinic clutching his intestines in his hand.

Finally, someone stopped and gave us a ride. Once home, I discovered that my parents were fine (my father, who was a

Mrs. Katzmark, who lost her husband in the disaster, posed with her second-grade class in this 1947 photograph. The author is seated in the front row, third from the right, his friend Larry Clark to his right.

shift worker, was asleep at home at the time of the blast) and our house suffered only minor damage. But, Dodger, my dog, had run away, terrified by the explosion.

We were staying with friends in nearby La Marque when the second ship exploded at 1:10 A.M. the next morning. Awakened by the blast, I noticed my mother sitting in an armchair sobbing.

During the next couple of days, I often sat with my parents and listened as radio announcers coldly read the names of those who had perished. Mrs. Katzmark's husband was a victim, as were a neighbor and the fathers of some of my classmates. When the name of an acquaintance was read, my mother cried again.

On Friday afternoon, when we were allowed to reenter Texas City, we learned that our house had survived the second explosion and that Larry Clark's father had escaped unharmed. And, we found that Dodger had returned home, hungry and frightened, some time during our 48-hour absence. ★

served 33 months in the Pacific theater, told his boss: "If this would have happened in the Navy, the orders would have been 'scuttle the ship.'" The two men got to their feet and ran from the store.

The explosion impaired the hearing of some near the docks. Many survivors recalled the most ghastly sights and terrible smells, but their dominant memory was of total silence. As if in a nightmare, Madelaine Rockefeller could not forget how she had struggled through knee-deep water and piles of rubble as she fought to escape the benzol tanks before they exploded. But what stuck with her most was the eerie quiet. "The utter silence was awful," she recalled. Harold Fletcher, who had driven a friend to watch the fire, was blown against a chain-

link fence. When he gathered his wits, he discovered he "couldn't hear anything at all," but he could see and feel "stuff . . . falling back down" on and about him.

People observed strange sights and odd behavior. W. H. Lane, a research chemist, heard a co-worker call to him: "Hey Harry! Look at me! Ain't I lucky? I didn't even get scratched." The man got on a bicycle, rode two hundred yards, and fell off dead; the back of his skull had been blown away. A.N. Dowdy, who thought he was uninjured and asked a friend for a smoke, found that he could not inhale. Only then did he discover that he had a hole in his cheek; still later, Dowdy learned that he also had two shattered legs, a broken jaw, crushed arm, and a fractured skull. Carl Baker, a timekeeper for the railway com-

pany, awakened under his desk about ten minutes after the explosion. He walked to the gate and caught a ride downtown to a clinic; about an hour later he realized that he was clad only in a belt and underwear. Jill Dugat, a pre-schooler, was pushed into a closet by a maid following the blast. When she was permitted out, she thought the cleaning lady "had done something bad to our house."

The uninjured and those not too badly hurt guided the disoriented or carried the lame to safety. Others searched feverishly through the rubble for survivors, or drove the severely injured to clinics in Texas City. A passerby discovered a small boy walking aimlessly down Dock Street. On closer inspection, he found that the youngster was clutching his internal organs in his hands. A nurse at Danforth Clinic remembered a man who carried his wife into the examining room; when told to lift her onto the table, he replied: "I can't; I can't let go of her. I'm holding her insides in." She died moments later.

Ben Powell, owner of the Showboat Drug Store, and Lee Beardon, who owned a grocery store, set up first-aid stations in front of their shops and bandaged victims. When Patrolmen Bell regained consciousness, he commandeered a bus and drove to within three blocks of the docks; he found people "lying all over the ground with no arms, no heads, all under rubbish and half covered up." He also found some survivors, whom he transported downtown. Sally Wehmeyer, who owned a funeral home, drove her emergency ambulance to the blast site and searched for the injured.

People hurried to search for relatives. Gordon Cooper, who was looking for his father-in-law, "never recognized anyone; they were all so black with oil and molasses." He stayed for hours helping everyone he found. Nina Fay drove to the docks in search of her father. She found him several blocks from the waterfront, a piece of steel imbedded in his side.

Parents rushed to schools in search of children. Although several schools in



THE ROSENBERG LIBRARY, GALVESTON



UPI/BETTMANN

The explosions and fires killed more than five hundred and injured more than three thousand. Property damage was extensive, not just on the waterfront (top, left), but also in the downtown. In all, 55 businesses were totally destroyed (bottom, left).

Texas City were located within ten blocks of the docks, no students were fatally injured. However, many suffered cuts from flying glass and most were frightened. Allan Peveto, a fourth grader, thought "the world must be ending." A boy in Katherine Leinging's eleventh-grade class had another idea. He screamed: "They are bombing us. Get under your desks." Clint Rasmussen, a second-grader, had recently seen a movie about an earthquake and was certain that a tremor had struck Texas City.

The students in Mary Catherine Kenny's second-grade class dived under their desks at their teacher's direction, but then panicked and bolted for the door. Karl Burns, a high school student, ran to the exit, but "metal was falling so much" that he remained inside until it was safe.

Additional casualties may have been averted because the force of the explosion slammed many classroom doors shut, jamming them and preventing an immediate exit. Eloise Cameron, an elementary teacher, was trapped inside with 27 children who were "screaming hysterically, 'I want out! I want out!'" She later remembered that she passed each child "over the transom to be caught on the other side by two teachers," then she climbed out.

Word of the disaster spread quickly. Striking telephone-workers in Texas City dropped their picket signs and hurried to their workstations. A supervisor who phoned the telephone company office in Galveston was the first in Texas City to reach the outside world. "For God's sake, send the Red Cross," were his first words. Radio station KLUF in Galveston broadcast a bulletin three minutes after the explosion.

Help was soon to arrive. The first aircraft bringing relief landed in Texas City's tiny airport less than ninety minutes after the blast. The Salvation Army had personnel on the scene within seventy minutes. Food and medicine poured in during the day; morticians from throughout

Texas hurried to Texas City

Gertrude Girardeau helped organize the Red Cross response from Galveston. That very morning her office had received 210,000 war-surplus surgical dressings, which she forwarded to Texas City. During the ensuing days, she procured medicine from local pharmacies and blankets from motels, and she enlisted volunteers to house the homeless. A synagogue in Galveston collected clothing for those who needed it.

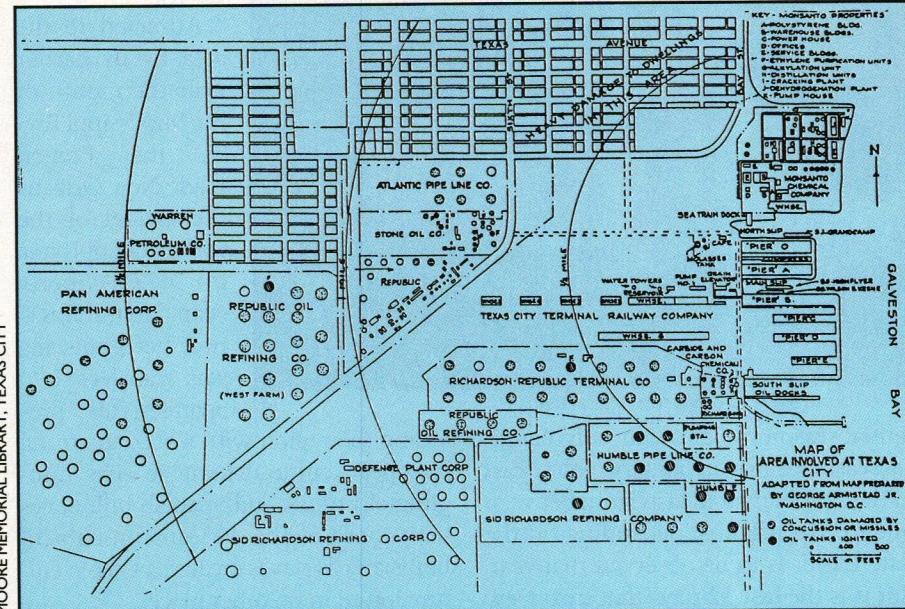
Galveston, where a devastating hurricane had hit in 1900, had an emergency plan, which it immediately put into operation. Doctors and nurses were speeded toward Texas City within thirty min-

utes of the blast. The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston cancelled classes and sent its students to the disaster site. Fort Crockett, a Galveston army installation, set up a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital.

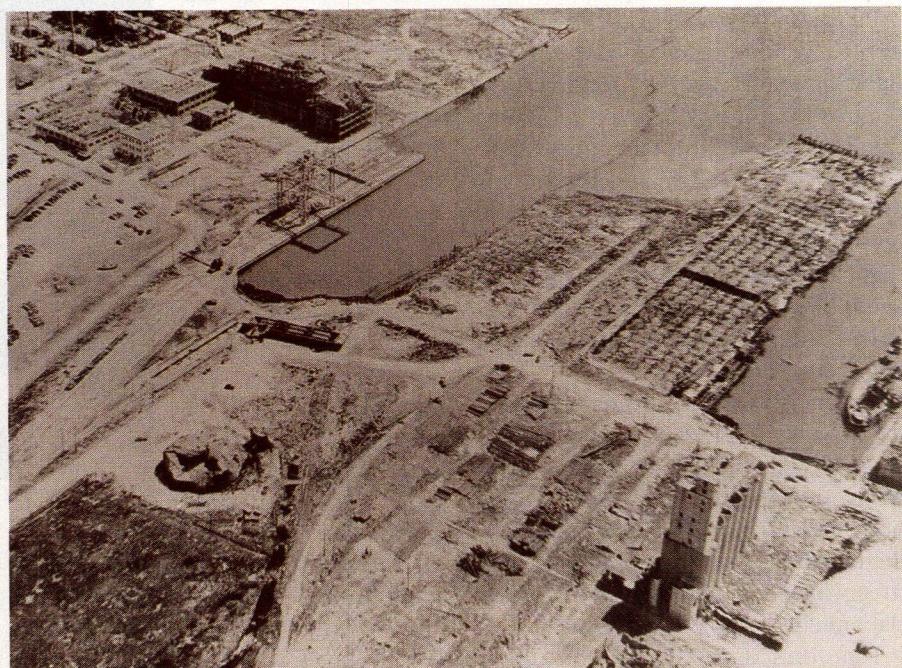
Doctors from throughout southern Texas flooded into the stricken city. Many arrived on military and civil-air-patrol aircraft. Some came in private planes. Doctor Robert Harris drove to the Houston Police Department when he learned of the explosion. As soon as he identified himself, an officer grabbed him by the arm, shouted "Let's get going," and took him on "the wildest ride of my life" to the

continued on page 60

MOORE MEMORIAL LIBRARY, TEXAS CITY



OORE MEMORIAL LIBRARY TEXAS CITY



The shock waves released by the explosions are indicated on this plan of the disaster area (top, right). The Grandcamp's location is indicated just south of the Monsanto plant, which is located at the far right. Not much remained of the chemical company's facility following clean-up (bottom, right).

TIME TRAVELER

visiting the past

Thousands of visitors flock to New Orleans each year to be part of a unique and exciting international event—the *Mardi Gras* celebration, with its frenzy of revelry, music, parades, balls, and parties that culminates on “Fat Tuesday,” the last day before the Christian peni-

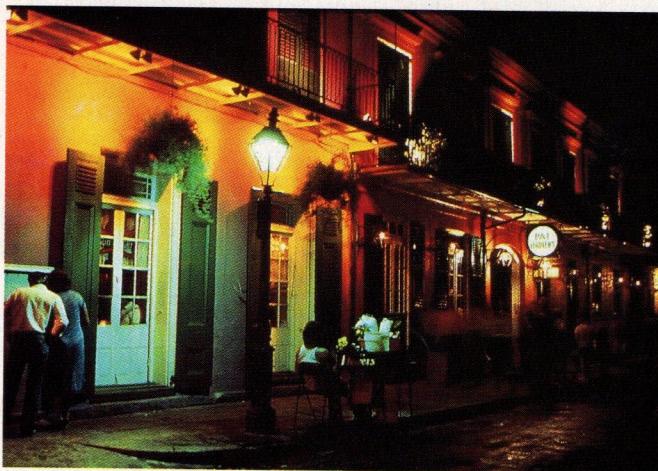
ary 20, and once again, the city will be bursting at the seams with revelers ready to pump more than \$500 million into the local economy. Spectacular as it is, there is much more to New Orleans than just *Mardi Gras*, and visitors interested in the history of this truly unique American city will find much to arouse their curiosity.

Attracted to the area by its harbor near the mouth of the Mississippi River, the French made New Orleans the capital of the colony of Louisiana in 1723. Forty years later, the territory of Louisiana was transferred to Spanish rule, pro-

viding the region with a second strong European cultural heritage. The mingling of French and Spanish influences with those of the Africans brought to Louisiana as slaves created a Creole culture found in no other place.

The French regained control of the colony in 1800, but kept it only three years before selling Louisiana to the United States for \$15 million, doubling the country's size. The port of New Orleans grew quickly now that American cotton, sugar, and other crops could be shipped down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico, and the city has since played an important role in the economic and cultural life of the United States.

Visitors to New Orleans are drawn immediately to the six-square-block area known as the *Vieux Carré*—literally, Old Square—where some of the old-



FRENCH QUARTER AT NIGHT; PHOTO BY SYDNEY BYRD

tential season of Lent. Officially, *Carnival* season begins on January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany, and lasts from between one to two months, depending on the date Easter is to be observed that year. But it is the last 12 days that turn New Orleans into party-goer's paradise.

Pierre le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, the French explorer who established settlements in the territory of Louisiana, was the first person in what would become the United States to mention *Mardi Gras*. In 1699, while camped along the Mississippi River about sixty miles from present-day New Orleans, he realized that back home in France the date was being marked by the traditional pre-lenten observance and named the spot *Pointe du Mardi Gras*.

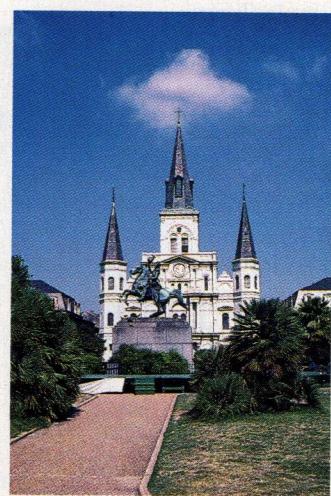
The modern New Orleans version of the festivities originated more than a century and a half later, with a *flambeaux*, a nighttime, torchlight procession, held in 1857. Since that time, more than 1,800 parades through the city's streets have featured floats, bands, and elaborately costumed characters.

This year's *Mardi Gras* falls on Febru-

est residential and commercial buildings in continuous use in the country bear witness to two centuries of the city's history. Centerpiece for the French Quarter is *St. Louis Cathedral*, erected between 1794-1797 after a fire destroyed its predecessor on the same site. The classical European-style cathedral underwent extensive alteration in the mid-nineteenth century, but is one of the oldest Catholic cathedrals in the country and is open daily to visitors.

The *Presbytère*, which stands alongside the Cathedral, also dates from the 1790s. Called *Casa Curiel* by the Spanish, who then controlled Louisiana, it was intended as a residence for Capuchin monks. It was leased for commercial purposes at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and served as a courthouse from 1834 until 1911, when it was transferred to the Louisiana State Museum (LSM). Today it houses exhibits on the state's history.

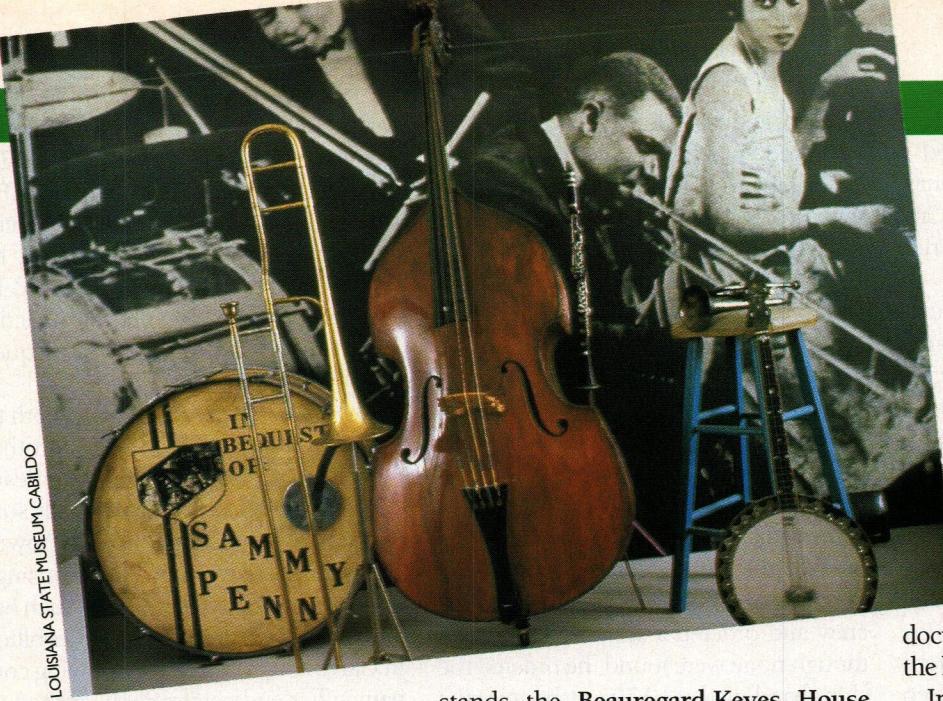
Another Spanish-colonial building, the *Cabildo* or town hall, was completed in 1799 as the seat of New Orleans' municipal government. Once the home of the state Supreme Court, the *Cabildo*



ST. LOUIS CATHEDRAL, JACKSON SQUARE

was occupied by the LSM early in the twentieth century. A fire in 1988 spurred a \$6.5-million restoration program that was completed in 1994. The museum, which is open daily except Mondays, houses a new exhibition that chronicles the history of Louisiana from the early explorers through the post-Civil War Reconstruction era.

Two other properties administered by the LSM are the *1850 House* on Jackson Square and the *Old U.S. Mint* on Esplanade Avenue. The *1850 House* is a re-creation of an antebellum family residence and is furnished with items made



LOUISIANA STATE MUSEUM CABILDO

or sold in New Orleans during the mid-nineteenth century. The Mint, completed in 1839, manufactured U.S. coins until 1909, except for the brief period during which it served the Confederacy. Following its closure by the U.S. Treasury Department, the building served as a prison and then as offices for the U.S. Coast Guard. Today, it holds LSM's jazz collection and Mardi Gras exhibits. For information on any of the State Museum sites call 504-568-6968.

One of the oldest buildings in New Orleans—indeed in the Mississippi Valley—is the Ursuline Convent (504-529-3040) on Chartres Street. Built in 1734, it was the only early French building to survive both of the fires that swept through the city near the end of the eighteenth century. The convent served as home to the Ursuline nuns who had come from France in 1727 to teach and to care for the sick and orphaned. Tours of the convent, now serving as the archives of the New Orleans archdiocese, are available.

Just across the street

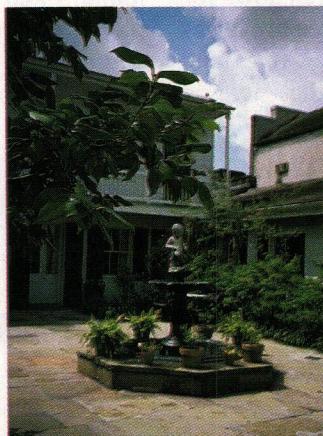
stands the Beauregard-Keyes House (504-523-7257), with its beautiful enclosed garden. Once home to Confederate General Pierre G. T. Beauregard, the house was built around 1826 by Joseph Le Carpentier, a prosperous auctioneer.

Novelist Frances Parkinson Keyes, who lived here in the 1940s, restored the house and later provided in her will for its use as a museum.

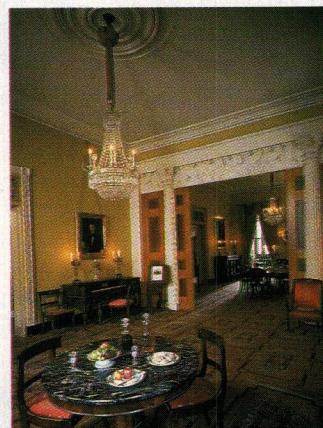
Not far away is the New Orleans Pharmacy Museum (504-568-8027), located in a building constructed for Louis Joseph Dufilho, Jr., America's first licensed pharmacist (1816). In addition to the ground-

floor, nineteenth-century apothecary, the museum boasts a rare 1855 soda fountain and a courtyard herb garden.

On St. Louis Street, the meticulously restored Hermann-Grima House (504-525-5661) reflects the American influence on New Orleans architecture and the gracious lifestyle enjoyed by a well-to-do Creole family during the antebellum period. Visitors can experience period cooking from the home's kitchens and view original slave quarters and stables.



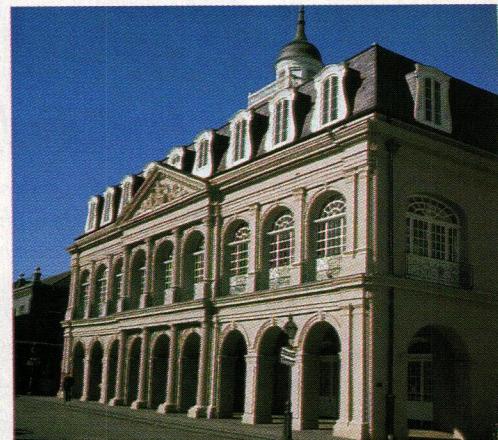
BEAUREGARD-KEYES HOUSE COURTYARD



HERMANN-GRIMA HOUSE PARLOR

The Historic New Orleans Collection/Museum Research Center (504-523-4662), operated by the Williams Foundation, occupies two French-Quarter houses—the Williams Residence, built in 1889, and the 1792 Mericourt House. Collections include fine antiques and artworks, as well as maps, books, documents, and photographs relating to the history of the New Orleans region.

In addition to these and other historic homes and museums in the *Vieux Carré*, New Orleans also offers such attractions as the French Market, on a site used for the same purpose by the Choctaws and other local Indians as far back as two centuries before the arrival of the Europeans; the St. Louis cemetery, where above-ground burial sites—necessitated by the city's water table that makes in-ground burials impractical—are marked by elaborate, architect-designed tombs;



LOUISIANA STATE MUSEUM CABILDO

the Pitot House Museum on Bayou St. John, built during the Spanish regime and purchased in 1810 by James Pitot, the first mayor of the incorporated city of New Orleans; and Chalmette, the plantation site of the 1815 Battle of New Orleans that is now part of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

For information on these and other historic attractions in New Orleans call the Greater New Orleans Tourist & Convention Commission at 504-566-5011. ★

TEXAS CITY DISASTER

continued from page 57

Houston airport, where he boarded a small aircraft owned by a Dallas automobile dealer and was flown to Texas City. Another hair-raising, high-speed ride brought him to the waterfront.

Firefighters from more than forty towns, as well as from nearby Camp Wallace and Ellington Air Force Base, arrived throughout the day. Gas masks for rescue workers were sent by local plants. Union Carbide dispatched a crew with two dozen bulldozers and gravel trucks; by mid-afternoon they had cleared a road to the burning dock area. Police from Houston and elsewhere arrived and joined army units to preserve order. Boy Scouts served as guides and Western Union messenger boys, or helped sweep glass from city sidewalks. By evening, the army had established field kitchens—one for whites, another for blacks.

Even while the rescue and relief efforts proceeded, the holocaust claimed other lives. Father William Roach, parish priest at St. Mary's Catholic Church, died in a secondary explosion while administering last rights to one of the initial vic-

tims.

Then, at dusk, a terrifying new danger appeared when fire was discovered aboard the *High Flyer*, which was loaded with nearly a thousand tons of ammonium-nitrate fertilizer. The force of the *Grandcamp*'s explosion had torn both the *High Flyer* and the *Wilson B. Keene* (which had a cargo of flour) from their moorings at Piers A and B, and smashed them together, killing seven crewmen on the *Keene* and one on the *High Flyer*. In an instant, the two vessels had become interlocked.

Immediately after the *Grandcamp* exploded, the skipper of the *High Flyer*, Ross Petermann, assembled his surviving crew and ordered a search for fires. Although none were found, he ordered the ship abandoned at 10:30 A.M. because the thick smoke and pungent sulfur fumes along the waterfront made breathing difficult. Both the *Keene* and *High Flyer* lay helpless. Heavy damage to the *Keene* rendered her engine room inaccessible. The *High Flyer*'s turbines had been down for repair for several days. Incredibly, it was not until 12 hours after the *Grandcamp* exploded—three hours after it was

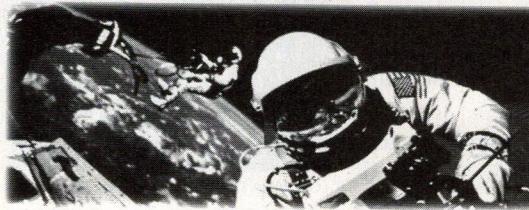
learned that *FGAN* was burning in the two hold of the ship—that an attempt was made to find tugboats to tow *High Flyer* to a remote part of Galveston Bay. Confusion among the surviving officials at the docks was understandable, but Coast Guard personnel had arrived before noon. Their inexplicable inaction went uninvestigated in the subsequent Coast Guard inquiry.

At 9:00 P.M., representatives of both the Terminal Railway and Lykes Brothers Steamship Company of New Orleans, which owned the *High Flyer*, finally summoned tugboats from the Bay Towing Company in Galveston. Not surprisingly, no mariner stepped forward for such hazardous duty. J.G. Tomkins, a Lykes official in Galveston, hurried to the towing company office and personally inveigled the men to undertake the mission. A tugboat captain later testified that Tomkins told them that Lykes chemists had given assurances that ammonium nitrate could not explode; a mate on a tug said that Tomkins told them the *High Flyer* contained only non-explosive cargo.

At the same time Tomkins was trying to persuade the men of the safety of the mis-

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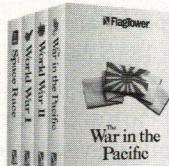
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sion, Pat Flaherty of radio station KPRC in Houston broadcast nationally over NBC that there was "imminent danger of another ship exploding in the dock area." Indeed, the harbor had earlier been cleared of all vessels due to the likelihood of another explosion. Through chicanery, and perhaps the payment of bonuses as well, Tomkins recruited two crews, and the *Guyton* and *Albatross* set off across the bay.

The tugs arrived about 11:30 P.M., and their crews worked to move the *High Flyer*. Wielding acetylene torches, the workers cut the anchor adrift at the water line. Five men boarded the *High Flyer* and attached stern lines on her bow and to both tugs. The ship "sounded like a volcano," one of the crewmen said later.

The *High Flyer* could not be disengaged from the *Keen*, and after almost an hour and a half, the endeavor was abandoned. By then flames were leaping out the cargo hold. The tugs retreated into the bay, and police cleared the area near the pier.

At 1:10 A.M., the *High Flyer* exploded.

Although the tugs had fifteen minutes to run for safety, several men aboard were injured by shrapnel, and the *Guyton* was disabled. When the blast occurred, Ben Kaplan was broadcasting live on Houston's KTHT. He was cut off in mid-sentence: "Here comes another explosion! [Y]ou just heard it . . . We are bending

sions and widespread property damage.

Minutes after the blast, ambulance sirens pierced the night as the newly injured were transported to area hospitals. More than three thousand people were injured on April 16-17; 852 required hospitalization and seven percent of those perished.

"SO CONSIDERABLE was the blast that it was recorded on a seismograph a thousand miles away in Denver, Colorado."

down. The sky is like bright daylight . . . We have all hit the ground . . . We are all hitting the deck!" A voice in the background could be heard shouting: "Stay on the ground. Stand by for shrapnel." Then Kaplan reported: "Folks are running in the street. A large piece of metal has just landed within ten feet of us."

Although the *High Flyer* exploded with approximately the same force as the *Grandcamp*, preventive measures reduced casualties; only two died and 24 were injured. Nevertheless, shrapnel ignited new fires, causing still more explo-

Some of those missing never were found. The eventual death toll stood at 563 killed or missing.

Property damage was extensive. Three thousand people were left homeless. Fifty-five businesses were totally destroyed or badly damaged, and three times that number sustained some damage. More than 1,100 vehicles were damaged or demolished, as were 362 railroad freight cars; three locomotives were destroyed. In excess of 500,000 barrels of oil burned.

The Coast Guard conducted an immediate and hurried inquiry into the causes

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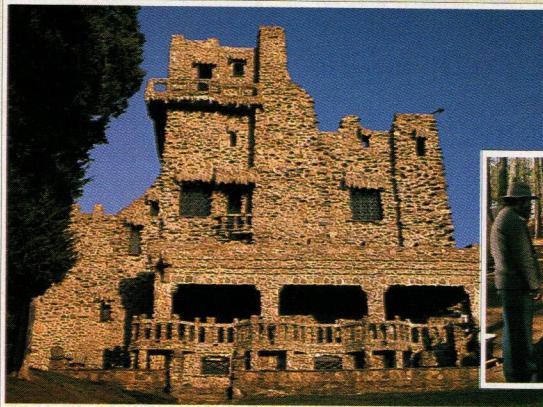
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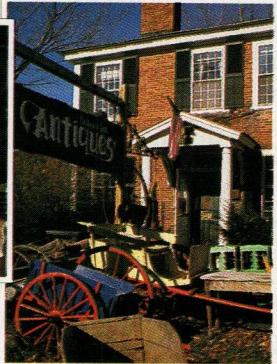
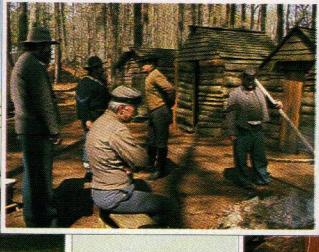
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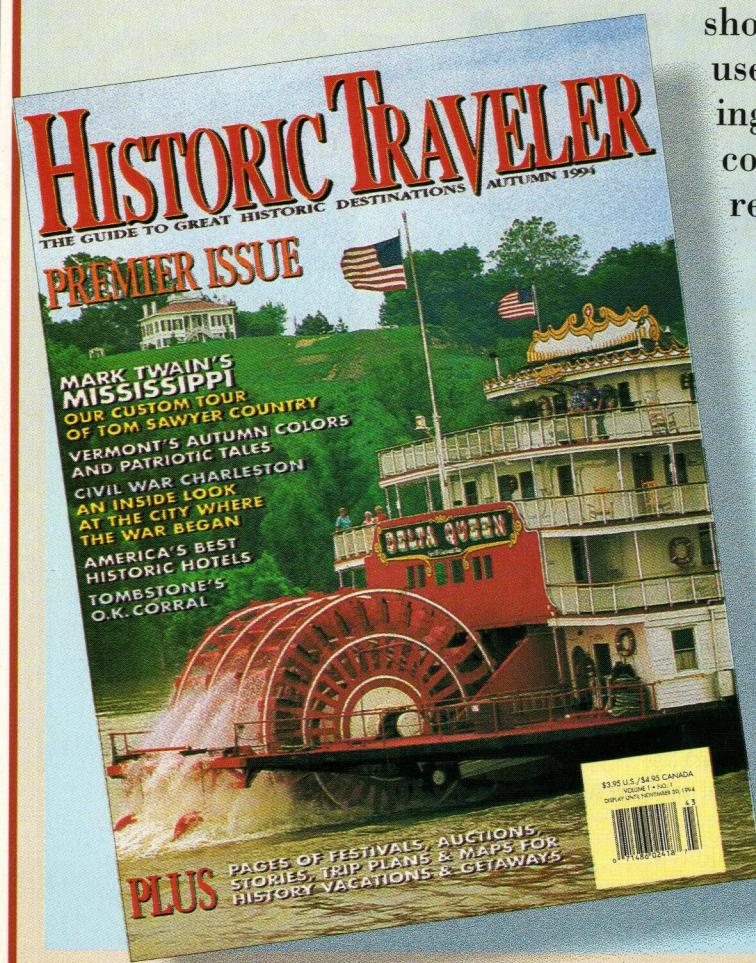
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of the disaster. Ruling out sabotage, they concluded that the fire aboard the *Grandcamp* was probably caused by a careless cigarette smoker. In their rush to judgment, the investigators did not consider other causes, such as spontaneous combustion. Indeed, had the inquiry been more deliberate, it might have contrasted the origins of the fire aboard the *Grandcamp* with the one that occurred the summer before on another French vessel loaded with FGAN. That ship, which had been bound for Texas City before it was rerouted, caught fire at Brest, France, and exploded, killing 22 and injuring 500.

The Coast Guard panel, quite correctly, found that every party who participated in the "handling, storage, and transportation of the cargo displayed a lack of knowledge of the provisions and regulations governing the safety of the operation." J. D. Latta, the ocean shipper who transported the FGAN to Texas City, was criticized for failing to notify the owners of the *Grandcamp* and *High Flyer* of the dangerous propensities of their cargo. The *Compagnie Générale Atlantique* of Paris, which operated the *Grandcamp* for the French government, was reproached for accepting torn bags of FGAN.

Almost everyone concerned with operations at the Texas City docks was censured for neglecting to enforce elemental safety standards. The investigation determined that the fire could have been swiftly extinguished had it been fought with water soon after its discovery; Captain de Guillebon, who died in the blast, was saddled with responsibility for preventing the use of fire hoses, although the evidence for such a judgment was far from conclusive. Finally, the Coast Guard ascertained that the decision to seal the hatch and ventilators and to introduce steam in an attempt to smother the fire only increased the temperature in the hold and amplified the likelihood of explosion. Once again de Guillebon, who could not answer, was indicted.

The Texas City disaster sparked two developments. First, several cities, beginning with New York, prohibited ships carrying FGAN from entering their harbors, and in August 1947, the Coast Guard banned ships with this cargo—it labeled them "explosive carriers"—from docking in thickly populated areas.

The disaster also revealed the possibility of using ammonium nitrate as a com-

mercial explosive. Alfred Nobel had included ammonium nitrate in his original formula for dynamite, but the compound's potential as a explosive in its own right was realized only after the Texas City tragedy. A new grade of ammonium nitrate (ANFO), one in which it is mixed with fuel oil, became the most widely substance for all commercial blasting in the U.S.

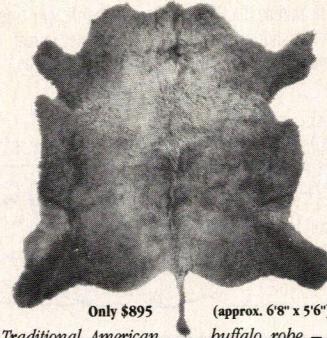
Litigation commenced soon after the board of inquiry issued its report, although it was far from clear who was responsible for this disaster. The Coast Guard had discovered many culpable parties, but it had cited no individual acts of negligence. Nevertheless, a test case against the government of the United States gradually emerged out of approximately three hundred suits filed by more than eight thousand plaintiffs.

The decision of these litigants to challenge the United States arose from a recent act of Congress. Throughout its history, the U.S. government, claiming sovereign immunity, had consented to be sued only in a narrow set of circumstances. However, a few months before the Texas City disaster, a long campaign by foes of sovereign immunity had resulted in passage of the Federal Tort Claims Act of 1946, which stipulated that the "United States shall be liable, respecting . . . tort claims, in the same manner and to the same extent as a private individual under like circumstances."

Even though Section 2680 (a) of the act protected the United States from liability arising from acts of governmental nature of function, the Texas City litigants sought damages from the United States for having used an explosive ingredient in a fertilizer and for permitting the shipment of such a dangerous commodity to a congested area without issuing appropriate warnings. The United States disclaimed responsibility and blamed the steamship companies, longshoremen's unions, stevedoring firms, and the city of Texas City.

With court permission, the numerous cases were consolidated into one test case, *Dalehite v. United States*. In 1950, a federal District Court found for the plaintiffs. It ruled that the United States had been negligent in the manufacture of FGAN and derelict in adequately policing the loading of such hazardous material. Elizabeth Dalehite, the widow of the ship pilot, was awarded \$60,000, and her son, Henry, Jr., \$15,000. However, two years later a Court

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of Appeals unanimously reversed the lower court ruling.

The case was immediately appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, and in June 1953, by a four-to-three vote, the majority decided that the United States was immune to suit, not only because no negligence on the part of any government agent had been demonstrated, but because the government was not liable for actions growing out of authorized activity.

The only recourse left to the plaintiffs was an "appeal" to Congress. Clark Thompson, Texas City's congressman, soon introduced legislation to provide federal compensation for personal and property damage. The Eisenhower Administration initially fought the bill. Warren Burger, then assistant attorney-general in the Justice Department, denounced the legislation as "a \$100,000,000 give away." When Congress approved the Texas City Disaster Act in August 1955, however, President Dwight Eisenhower signed it into law.

The legislation directed the secretary of the Army to investigate and settle disaster claims. With rare exceptions, only those who had filed in federal court before April 25, 1950 were eligible to file. Maximum awards were set at \$25,000 each for death, personal injury, and property damage. Previous insurance awards, with the exception of life insurance, were deducted from the eventual settlements. Attorneys could receive no more than ten percent of any award.

The United States ultimately investigated nearly 1,700 claims and made more than 1,400 awards totalling \$17 million. In addition, private insurance companies awarded in excess of \$32 million to corporate and private claimants. Charitable donations in excess of \$1 million also aided victims; some of these funds were raised ten days after the explosion in a benefit concert in Galveston that featured the likes of Jack Benny, Phil Harris, Frank Sinatra, and Gene Autry. The Red Cross spent \$1.2 million on relief operations in Texas City, and the U.S. government sheltered and fed 1,400 of Texas City's homeless for nearly three months following the disaster. More

than four thousand individuals, as well as the American government, filed suit against the Republic of France and the company that operated the *Grandcamp*, seeking damages in the amount of \$7 million. Those litigants were unsuccessful.

Within hours of the explosion of the *Grandcamp*, the *Texas City Sun*, which had to be printed in nearby Goose Creek because its facilities had been damaged, proclaimed that the stricken town would "rise again" to "grow and flourish." Incredibly, the port reopened in two weeks, and within five years, more than double the number of vessels were docking in Texas City. Twenty-five years later, Texas City's port, with nearly fifty docks, remained one of the busiest in the nation.

Every industry in the town expanded in the year that followed the disaster, including Monsanto, which gathered the twisted steel of its destroyed plant, sold it as scrap metal, and built a new facility equipped with latest technology.

Few Texas City residents moved away because of the catastrophe. Not only did 95 percent of Monsanto's surviving employees still work for the company there a year later, but the city's population tripled between 1940 and 1950, and doubled by 1960.

Although some businesses, such as Harry Rasmussen's Ford dealership, operated out of quonset huts for months, new buildings and schools gradually opened. And in April 1950, three years almost to the day after the disaster, the first Little League baseball game was played in Texas City. By then, save for a few crumbling, abandoned houses near the docks, a memorial on the site where the anchor to the *Grandcamp* had landed, and a small, wind-swept cemetery for the 63 victims who were never identified, few visible reminders remained of that terrible day in April 1947. ★

Today, John Ferling, who experienced this tragedy as a second-grader in Texas City, is a professor of History at West Georgia College in Carrollton.

MINNESOTA'S VIKINGS*continued from page 25*

ed the inscription, then carved and buried the runestone, perhaps to forever mislead and bewilder his pious Scandinavian neighbors.

Other scholars have reached similar conclusions. Historian Theodore C. Blegen pointed out in his 1968 book on the controversy that there was evidence that Ohman "wanted to devise something to crack or 'Bother the Brains of the Learned' . . ." When added to the knowledge that "he owned a book containing an exposition of runes, real doubt must creep in. When it is still further added that Ohman's friend Sven Fogelblad was believed to be well versed in runes . . . the strain on credulity must become nearly unendurable."

Dr. Paul S. Hanna, an Oxford-educated historian born in Fargo, North Dakota, was raised in the western Minnesota lake country. As a child he had heard the Viking legends and puzzled over the holes in the rocks on the Cormorant lakeshore. After World War II, he decided to explore the logical Viking river routes north of Winnipeg. He spent a whole summer in a canoe with two companions, working his way northward from Lake Winnipeg to Oxford Lake, and to York Factory.

The trio did not find any "mooring stones" or Viking artifacts, but they did find the most awe-inspiring, impassable rapids. After being nearly drowned on several occasions, Hanna became convinced that no Viking ever sailed upstream from Hudson Bay. "The idea," he says, "that Vikings ever sailed their long ships into Minnesota lakes is absolutely preposterous. If they came to Minnesota, they most certainly walked. I guess they could have built canoes or small row-boats, but it would have been nearly impossible to get them past those rapids . . . even for a Norwegian."

So if there were no long ships on Minnesota's inland waters, who drilled all those holes in the rocks along the lakeshore? Lillian Kratzke, of Pelican Rapids, says it was her father, Swedish immigrant Willie Anderson, who took up farming near the north shore of Cormorant Lake in the late 1800s.

In 1908, according to Lillian, he was looking for rock with which to build

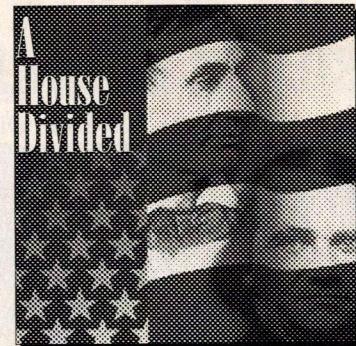
basement walls for the farmhouse where she spent her childhood. It was early spring, and snow still covered most rocks. He did find three protruding above the snow, but they were some distance from the building site. He drilled holes in the rocks, intending to use powder to blast the rocks into smaller pieces. "Dad," Lillian remembers, "said he drilled one hole about seven inches deep. Then he started another in a rock that was too hard. He was working on the third hole when it started to get dark, so he went home." Before he got back to that project, however, the snow melted, and Anderson, according to his daughter, chose more convenient rocks.

Holand mentioned there were three holes—one deep, two shallow. It makes sense, much more sense than fourteenth-century Norsemen trying to pound holes in solid rock with tools of soft, medieval iron to anchor a ship they could have never hauled up-river from Hudson Bay.

Despite this and other evidence to the contrary, there are those who hold fast to the notion that Norsemen did indeed visit what is now Minnesota during the 1300s. In Ulen, Clay County, tradition holds that Hans O. Hanson Strand, while he was breaking virgin prairie in 1911, discovered a six-hundred-year-old sword. With a heavy hand-hammered, double-edged blade and spiraled bronze handle, the Ulen sword certainly looks medieval in design, and it was found only twenty miles from Cormorant Lake. At a picnic area just north of town, letters cut into polished granite read: "The citizens of Ulen dedicate this monument to the venturesome Viking whose broken sword was unearthed three miles west of Ulen in 1911."

Like the sword, the other Scandinavian relics are now on display in area museums, monuments to Norsemen, real or imagined. They buttress the faith of those who believe that the Kensington Runestone is genuine. But, the only fact that is known for sure is that the stone has been, and will be for years to come, the subject of books, articles, television programs, and continued speculation about whether the Vikings did find their way into what is now Minnesota, or if the Kensington Runestone is one of this country's most successful hoaxes. ★

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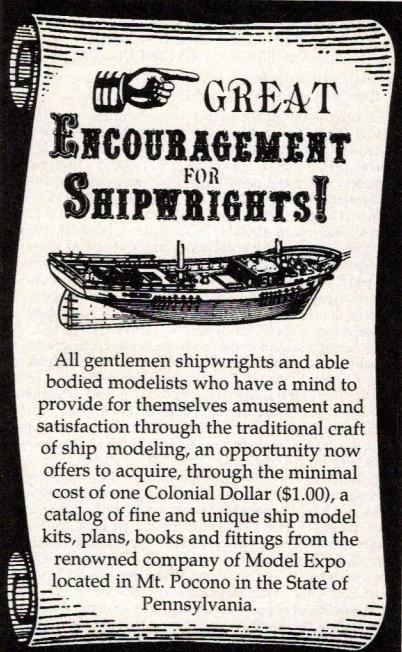
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PEACE, LOVE, MUSIC

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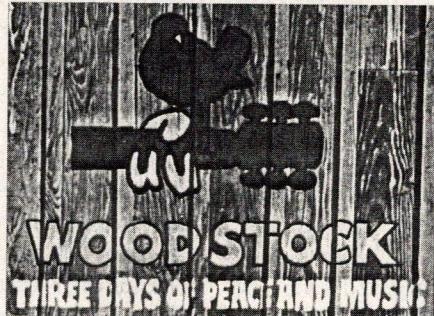
tion of the New York Thruway. Cars were abandoned all along the interstate and throughout nearby Bethel and White Lake. Emergency food, water, and medical supplies were flown in by National Guard and Army helicopters.

Lang, realizing that security of some kind was needed, developed a "Please Force" of unarmed policemen, including members of a commune called the "Hog Farm," who were especially effective in dealing with LSD overdoses or "acid freakouts." Whether it was the calming influence of the hallucinogenic drugs on hand or the peaceful tone set by the concert's producers and the Hog Farmers, as the commune members were called, Woodstock is remarkable for what didn't happen.

Nearly one American in every five hundred was in attendance at Woodstock. For three days half a million people congregated with little food (most vendors ran out) or potable water; poor sanitation; and too many drugs, yet only two died, an amazing achievement if one considers the statistics involved. One death occurred when a farmer hooked a tractor to a wagon and accidentally rolled over a boy in a sleeping bag. The other death was attributed to a heroin overdose. Although there are many tales of births at Woodstock, none can be verified as happening at the festival site. The pregnant women were all flown to area hospitals.

Although Woodstock is best-remembered for its music, the biggest artists of the day were not in attendance. The Beatles, who were then on the verge of breaking up, had not appeared in concert since 1966. Organizers purposely excluded the Rolling Stones from the festival for fear they would incite or bring violence to the event. Bob Dylan, whom concert-goers expected to make a "surprise" appearance, was a conspicuous no-show.

Abbie Hoffman, the famous 1960s radical leader, met with the Woodstock producers and threatened to shut down the concert with a staged riot unless



they acceded to a \$10,000 demand. To avoid the possibility of disaster, they reluctantly paid him. But Hoffman showed up anyway. When he jumped on-stage during the Who's set to make a political statement, he was greeted with a flying guitar to the head wielded by guitarist Pete Townshend. Hoffman jumped off the stage, ran into the crowd, and wasn't seen again at the event. It was one of the few reported incidents of violence in the festival's three days.

After the event, which became a free concert when the fences were torn down, the producers were deeply in debt. The documentary film of the concert and the sound recording, neither of which organizers owned outright, eventually paid enough in royalties to help them break even by 1980.

Many of the most important musical artists at the festival, for contractual reasons, never made it on the film or album and thus have been largely forgotten in the context of Woodstock. For example, the Grateful Dead, The Band, Creedence Clearwater Revival, and Janis Joplin were all there, but few know it.

The Port-O-San man, perhaps the most fondly-remembered person in the Woodstock film, sued Woodstock Ventures, claiming that he was embarrassed by having been shown cleaning toilets. The case was thrown out of court.

Wavy Gravy, the genial head of the Hog Farm commune, summed up the events at Woodstock best when he said, "Let's face it: Woodstock was created for wallets. It was designed to make bucks. And then the universe took over and did a little dance." There were other festivals, some even bigger, but none had the Woodstock magic.

When the festival was over, tons of refuse remained behind. Where else but Woodstock would they have made a giant peace symbol out of the garbage? ★

Tom Graves is a music critic from Memphis, who has written for Rolling Stone, The New York Times Book Review, The Washington Post, and other publications.

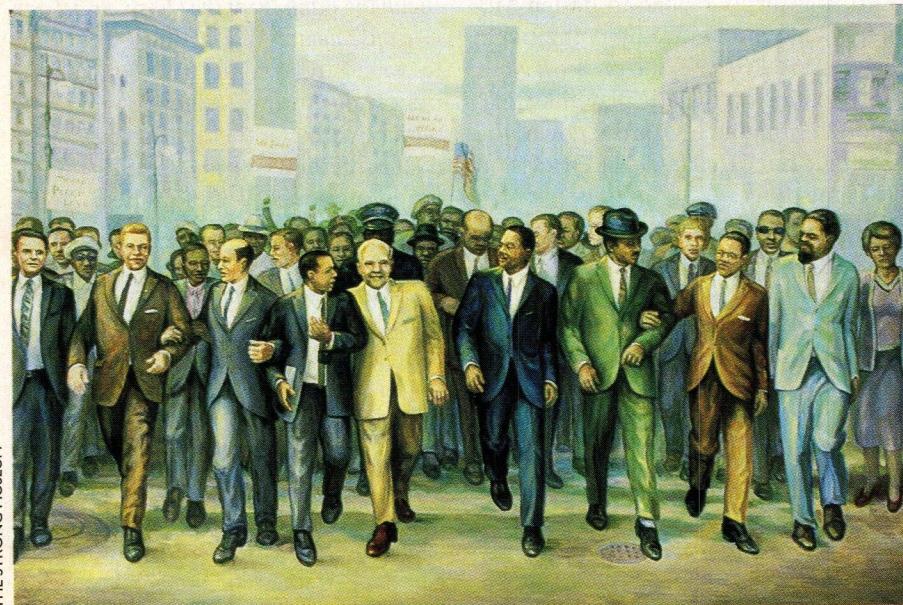
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MARCH ON DETROIT BY STEPHEN HALL

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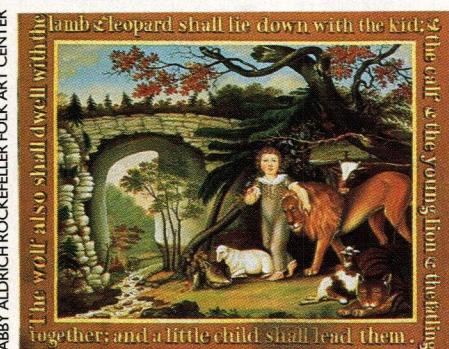
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TV'S WONDER YEARS

continued from page 34

silent. *Broadcasting* magazine said of the spectacle: "Television's camera eye had opened the public's."

The era's most riveting televised moments may well have come during the so-called Army-McCarthy hearings of 1954. Wisconsin's Senator Joseph R. McCarthy's witch-hunt for communists within the U.S. government came undone, in part, because of his own ill-at-ease manner in front of the probing television cameras that carried the disturbing capitol hill drama into the nation's living rooms. Urbane telejournalist Edward R. Murrow helped to hasten McCarthy's fall from grace by presenting a highly critical view of him on *See It Now*. Commenting on the role played by television in bringing McCarthy down, the *New York Times* declared that "Television has come of age."

Of the medium's truth-sensing quality, producer Fred Friendly commented: "Television can show you the Atlantic and the Pacific, and television can show you the face of the moon. But it

can also show you the face and heart of man. And perhaps what it does best is the latter."

Right from the start, television sought to satisfy the viewers' every mood and whim. The early-riser watched *Today* over breakfast. Telecast from a street-level studio, with New Yorkers on their way to work as the live audience, the show was affably hosted by Dave Garroway, with the able assistance of one J. Fred Muggs, a chimpanzee. For insomniacs, *The Tonight Show* with Steve Allen—a mix of skits and chat meant to banish the cares of the day—debuted in 1954.

Game-shows such as *What's My Line?*, *Break the Bank*, *Beat the Clock*, and *Truth or Consequences* allowed those at home to watch studio contestants compete for prizes or stump celebrity panelists. Quick-witted Groucho Marx slyly needled contestants on *You Bet Your Life*, offering an added prize to anyone who said the day's "secret word."

To youngsters, television brought perhaps the most wondrous moments of all. Freckle-faced marionette Howdy Doody, along with Buffalo Bob and Clarabell the Clown, delighted children in the Peanut Gallery and at home for 13 years, starting in 1947. Young and old alike took delight in *Kukla, Fran, and Ollie*, which featured puppeteer Burr Tillstrom, Fran Allison, and assorted creatures of the Kuklapolitan troupe. For the fanciful, *Mr. I. Magination* created a magical town where a child's wishes could come true. And, a quietly paced early-morning

Among the highlights of early television were the live dramatic shows that featured classics of the theater or new scripts, some of which went from TV to the stage and motion pictures. Pictured here is a Studio One presentation of "The Twelve Angry Men," whose stars included Robert Cummings, Franchot Tone, and John Beal.



show, *Captain Kangaroo*, combined pure entertainment with stories and basic education.

Slightly older children marveled as Superman leaped tall buildings in a single bound; cheered as Lassie, the intrepid collie, made yet another rescue; and—mouse-cap ears properly affixed—joined in 1955 in singing the timeless words of *The Mickey Mouse Club* theme song.

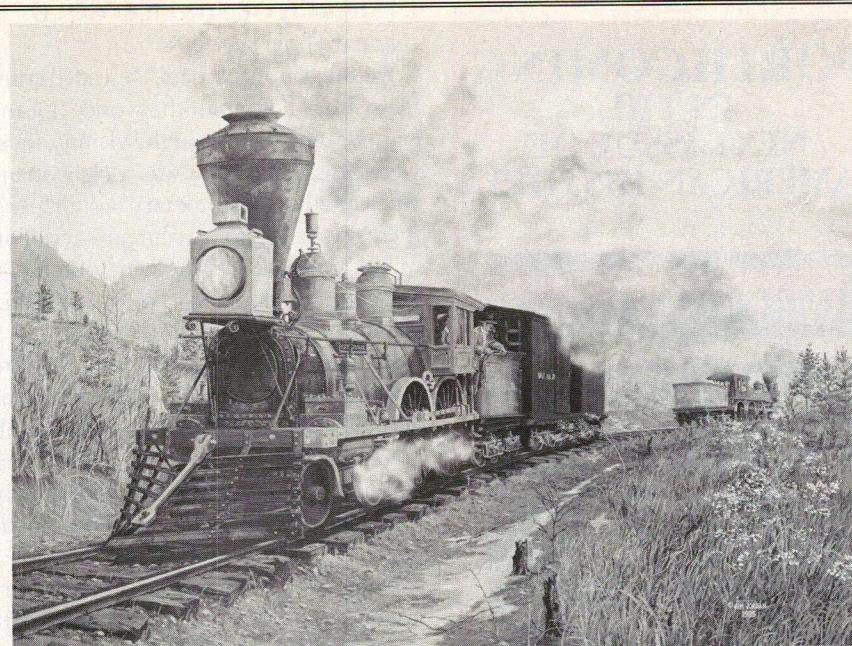
For the first television generation, held spellbound by shows that were charming, wholesome, and benevolent, memories of the new medium would have a lasting impact. Radio had already opened new vistas to home audiences; now, no home was so small that it could not host a symphony orchestra or a football game. But there was something about actually being able to see the concert or the game that provided an extra sense of immediacy and intimacy.

Questions about what television ought to be were asked early and often. Essayist E.B. White opined that television "should be our Lyceum, our Chautauqua, our Misnyk's, and our Camelot." But much as the medium raised expectations, it also raised concerns. "Television is the first truly democratic medium," critic Clive Barnes stated, "the first culture available to everybody and entirely governed by what the people want. The most terrifying thing is what the people want."

Comedian Fred Allen wisecracked: "Television permits people who haven't anything to do to watch people who can't do anything." And Edward R. Murrow noted the role of individual responsibility when he observed that "[Television] can teach, it can illuminate; yes, it can even inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends. Otherwise, it is merely lights and wires in a box."

The questions asked during television's formative years still crop up in discussions of the medium's potential. No one, pondering television's prospects a half-century ago, could foretell with much certainty what would come of this strange, compelling phenomenon. Many still wonder. ★

New York writer Edward Oxford has contributed more than two dozen articles to American History.



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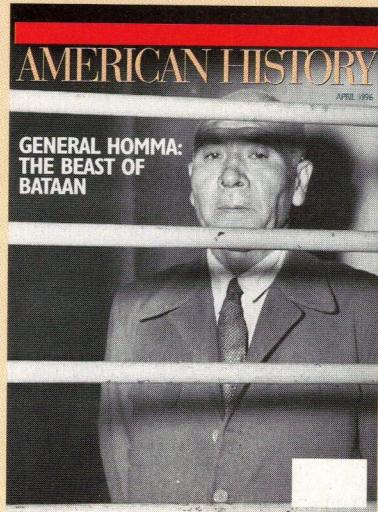
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FIRST TO DIE

Isaac Davis of Acton, Massachusetts, was one of those killed at Concord in 1775 by the "shot heard 'round the world."

... AND MORE

IN SEARCH OF SILVER & GOLD

continued from page 40

Koyukuk country "losers," "escaped criminals," the "flotsam of the world." Of the eight or nine women in the vicinity, most were prostitutes. One was a clergyman's wife, another a temporary visitor. And there was Nellie Cashman—resident, miner, employer, equipment purchaser, and without doubt one of the steadiest mining personalities in the North.

In this fierce environment, where strength and a variety of talents might allow one to succeed—if one did not fall to venereal disease, frostbite, alcohol, or a mining cave-in—Nellie mined, mostly the placer or alluvial ground on Nolan Creek.

Nellie did take some trips south during her years on the Koyukuk. She visited Arizona four or five times to see her friends and her nephews and nieces, who were like her own children to her. She also went on purchasing trips to Seattle, San Francisco, once even to New York. During a typical year she would leave Nolan Creek at least once for supplies and equipment, traveling the hundreds of miles to Fairbanks by boat, sled, or wagon, depending on the season.

There are no mining ledgers for Nellie's Koyukuk years, but she must have been doing well. She was always working ground, filing more claims. She never lacked for what she needed and always had sufficient funds to travel within Alaska or to the "outside." An intelligent, knowledgeable prospector and miner, she stayed in this harshest of environments because she was having luck and enjoyed it. And like all inveterate miners, she hoped that one day she would hit the "Big Bonanza."

The Koyukuk country was the fulfillment of her dreams. Here, among mankind's forgotten, Nellie worked her claims personally, usually with the help of a few hired hands. Near the end of her life, she even organized a firm, the "Midnight Sun Mining Company," with herself as trustee. The stock certificates proclaimed "No Offices" and "No Officers." Fifty thousand shares in the company went on sale at \$2.00 each.

Late in 1924, Nellie realized that she had severe health problems. Gradually, she worked her way down to Fairbanks, Juneau, and then Seattle. Finally, she requested to be sent to St. Joseph's Hospital

in Victoria—the very hospital she had helped fund almost forty years earlier. She was there for several weeks under the care of the Sisters of St. Ann and Doctor W. T. Barrett, who had also been her physician in Dawson. Nellie died on January 4, 1925, of "unresolved pneumonia."

Over the years, Nellie's career had made good copy because she was a female seemingly succeeding in a male environment. Inevitably, some of the newspaper notices she received cited her good works; she was, after all, a prime mover in building hospitals and churches in Pioche, Nevada; Victoria, British Columbia; Tombstone, Arizona; Dawson, Yukon Territory; and Fairbanks, Alaska.

Now, because she had been so well known, newspapers across North America printed obituaries. In the East, the *New York Times* published a few paragraphs that emphasized her reputation as a "champion woman musher" and noted her service as a nurse to needy miners. On the West Coast, newspapers in Tucson, Los Angeles, and San Francisco also pointed out her many travels, her use of dog sleds, and other apparently "non-female" activities. Even the *Engineering and Mining Journal-Press* succumbed to the same type of assessment, noting that she "was held in high regard by a very wide circle of acquaintances," but failed to give her credit as a miner.

Nellie started off in her first mining camp knowing absolutely nothing about mining or geology. In each successive locale, she absorbed herself in gaining knowledge of terrain, geology, equipment, and people. Then, her apprenticeship served, she spent the last 25 years of her life ably prospecting and mining.

Nellie's great consideration for her fellow man, which led to her lending a helping hand and funds when needed or coercing her frontier neighbors into contributing to churches and hospitals, has obscured her long, fascinating, and mostly successful mining career. But Nellie Cashman was indeed a true pioneer, who could face any challenge that the elements or man placed in her path. ★

Don Chaput is Curator Emeritus at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles. Author of numerous books and articles on mining, he has recently published Nellie Cashman and the North American Mining Frontier (Tucson: Westernlore Press, 1995).

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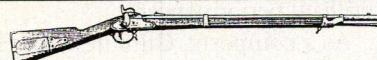
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PEACE JUBILEE

continued from page 46

where refreshments—from popcorn to baked beans—could be bought.

The crowd also found a great variety of sports and entertainment. For a few cents, one “might go round on the flying horses . . . try your hand at bird-shooting, rifle practice, target firing, ring throwing or stick flinging.” A stroller might also be serenaded by black minstrels, stop for a photograph, or pay 25 cents to take a seat in a tent at the end of the coliseum and hear the music being played inside.

During the week of the concerts, Boston itself took on a festive air. Many visitors to the city admired the beautiful Public Gardens with its many fountains, statues, and flowers. At the park's pond, a rowboat could be hired for only three cents, while the more exciting water velocipede was available for 25 cents. Vendors of all kinds of goods hawked their wares under the elms along Boston Common.

The week of the “Great National Peace Jubilee” was an inspiring one for visitors and residents alike. An enthusiastic reporter from a Portland, Maine newspa-

per wrote: “At all events, the works of the great masters were given by a body of over eleven thousand performers, not only with a grand massiveness, but also with a nicety of execution that approached perfection.”

The *New York Sun* declared that America had achieved a new status in the eyes of European nations. “At one step, without any preliminaries, without more special preparation than could be crowded into a few weeks,” it enthused, “we have lifted ourselves, so far as great musical art gatherings are concerned, to an artistic level with these nations. Hereafter, when the noted musical festivals of the world are enumerated, not only will it not be possible to ignore America, but she must head the list.”

Even the hard-to-convince Mr. Dwight of the *Journal of Music* came around, writing that “We congratulate, severally and individually, everybody and everything in any way, manner, shape, or kind connected with this Festival, the greatest musical event of the age.”

Gilmore promoted another monster concert, which opened in Boston on June 17, 1872. This event, scheduled to

run for ten days, had world peace as its theme. However, the great excitement of the peace theme, so popular in the days after the Civil War, had passed, and the 1872 festival was a financial failure, despite the presence of some of the best musical aggregations in the world.

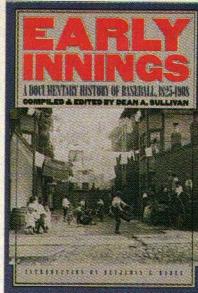
In the later years of his career, Gilmore dropped his grand concert themes and contented himself with serving as bandmaster of the 22nd Regiment of the New York National Guard. He and his band toured the United States, Canada, and Europe, always receiving recognition for brilliant performances.

As a composer, Gilmore wrote many band compositions, dance selections, and songs. His most popular air came from his New Orleans concert, for which he had composed “When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again” under the pen-name Louis Lambert. His extraordinary musical life ended, appropriately enough, while he was conducting his band at the great St. Louis Exposition of 1892. ★

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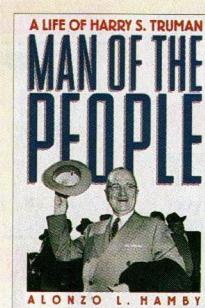
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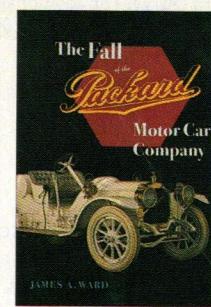
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TIME CAPSULE

objects in history

The notion of aircraft carriers in the Great Lakes seems unlikely. However, during World War II, the United States Navy based two carriers—actually converted side-wheel steamboats—in Lake Michigan's protected waters to train pilots in the fine art of landing an airplane on a flight deck. Hundreds of men completed their training in this manner, making more than 116,000 landings. Not every landing was successful, however, and by war's end, from three- to four- hundred aircraft littered the bottom of Lake Michigan off Naval Air Station Glenview in Illinois.

Thirty-one of the wrecked warbirds have been retrieved from the lake bottom by the Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, Florida. Each was chosen for recovery on the basis of its type, relative condition, and service history. In October 1993, a Douglas SBD-2 Dauntless, Bureau Number (BuNo) 2106 with a most impressive combat record, was discovered. Raised to the surface four months later, BuNo 2106 (below) has been un-

dergoing restoration in Pensacola and will go on display at the museum later this year.

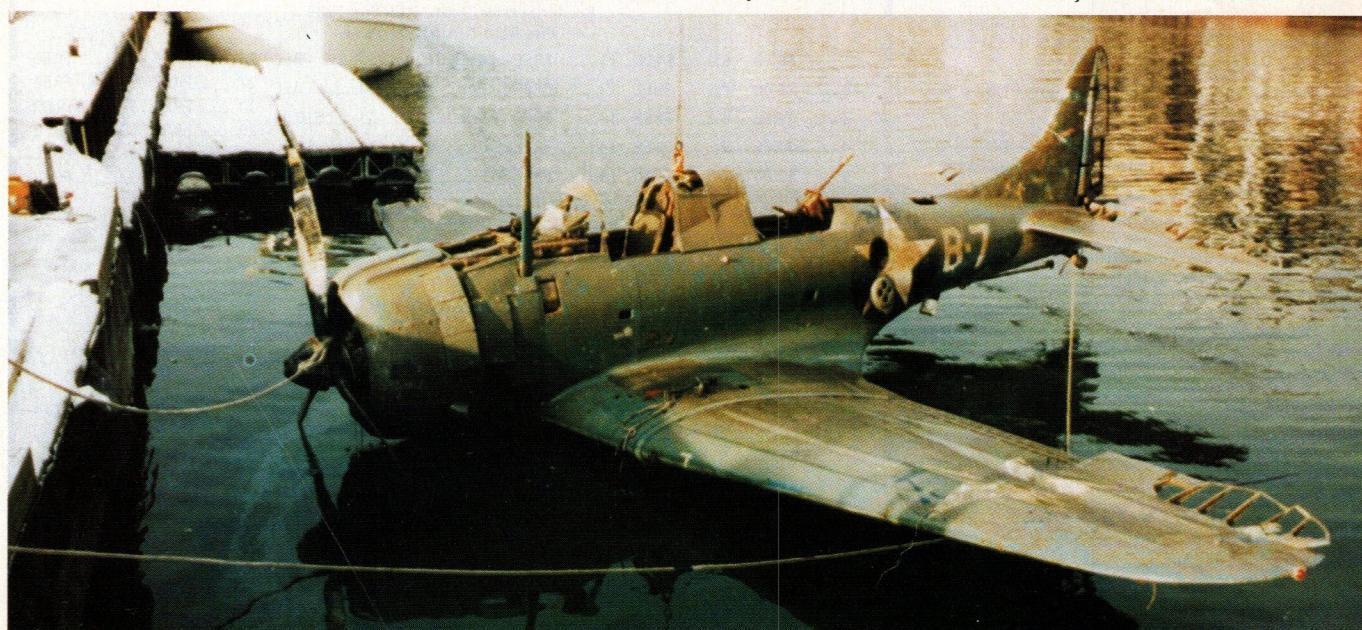


Built in 1940 at the Douglas Aircraft Company's plant in El Segundo, California, the scout bomber was assigned to the carrier USS *Lexington* and served in its air group during 1941. When the *Lexington* sailed to reinforce Midway Island on December 5, BuNo 2106 stayed behind in Pearl Harbor for repairs. Somehow the aircraft survived the Japanese surprise attack two days later.

Picked up by the *Lex* shortly after the bombing that brought the United States into the war, BuNo 2106 was part of the 104-plane armada that flew over New Guinea's Owen Stanley Mountains and launched the Navy's first assault on Japanese ships in the waters off the settlements of Lae and Salamaua. The pilot of BuNo 2106 on that mission, Lieutenant(jg) Mark Twain Whittier, was awarded the Navy Cross for pressing his attack in the face of enemy fire.

In late April 1942, BuNo 2106 was transferred to the Second Marine Aircraft Wing based on Midway. A month later, the Dauntless, flown by First Lieutenant Daniel Iverson, Jr., with Private First Class Wallace J. Reid (left) manning the Browning machine gun, took part in the Battle of Midway. For his part in the action, Lieutenant Iverson also received the Navy Cross for "extraordinary heroism . . . in the face of withering fire from enemy fighters and anti-aircraft batteries . . . His plane received 219 hits in different places from machine gun bullets and shrapnel and was so badly damaged that he was forced to make a landing on one wheel upon his return to the base." Private Reid, who continued firing despite being wounded, was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross.

Following its repair, BuNo 2106 was assigned to the Carrier Qualification Training Unit in NAS Glenview, where, in June 1943, a Marine pilot, who up to that point had an accident-free record, spun the plane into the lake while trying to abort a landing. The pilot was picked up by a Coast Guard cutter on patrol for just such an eventuality. The aircraft settled to the bottom, awaiting its recovery half a century later. ★



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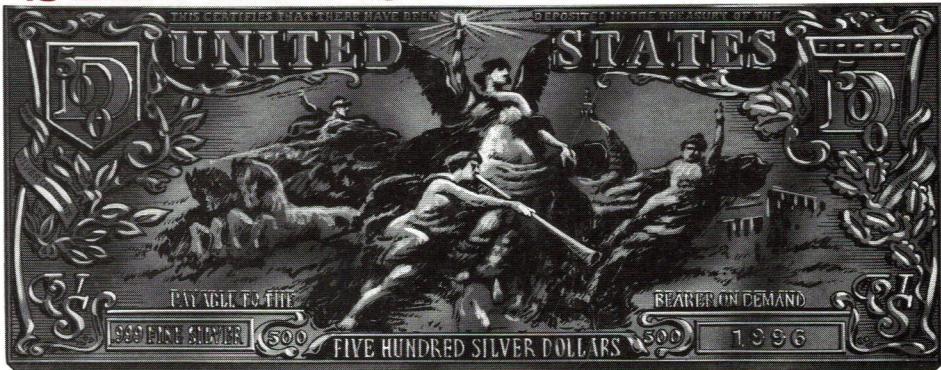
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